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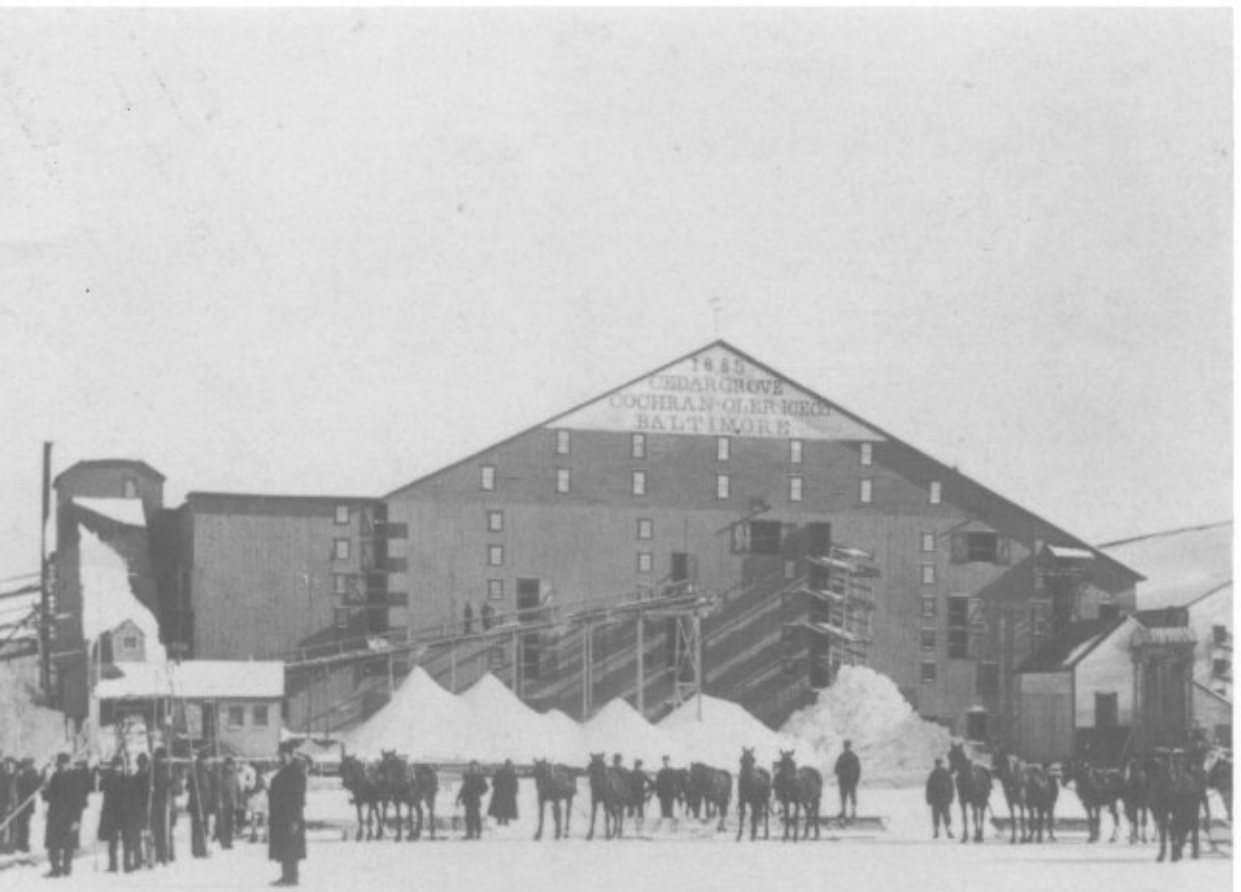
MARYLAND
Historical Magazine



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Editor's Notebook

In Defense of Buffs

By now surely there is no one who has not heard the term "Civil War buff" applied to those hobbyists who read a great deal about the national cataclysm, know all sorts of arcana about obscure weapons, buttons, etc., and who would prefer, we suspect, to live in 1862 or thereabouts. Harmless as this sounds, some have managed to arouse ire. They are called reenactors and are an altogether different and far more dangerous breed. They "play with guns," a consensus no-no in today's pure and pacific climate, and fully half are clearly beyond the pale, spirited but recusant heretics who wear gray uniforms and sport the Confederate flag. By ignoring all that has been learned since the Sixties, and by flaunting hot-button symbols, they simply dare us to take up the gauntlet.

My cousin Ed (hereinafter referred to as Cousin Ed) is one of those people. Thinking this editorial chair was too cushy, Cousin Ed called one day last summer to tell me I had been mustered (read drafted) into Durrell's Independent Battery, Pennsylvania Volunteer Artillery. This happy event coincidentally occurred in time for September's reenactment of the Battle of Antietam. So let me tell you, dear reader, what I learned about reenactors.

Everything you have heard and suspected about them is true. They are obsessive about details—buttons, shoes, eyeglasses, etc.—but accommodating on the larger issues. They don't use real bullets. They do use portable toilets. They drink (the Union infantry had a party Friday night that could be heard for miles). They are defiantly incorrect, politically, and the crazier among them would return to 1862 in a New York minute.

Here is what you perhaps do not know. They are from all walks of life and collectively are as well-read and knowledgeable as their counterparts of 1862, and far more so than too many college students today. Talk around the campfire often turns to—books. Reenacting is physically demanding. Shoes are slippery on grass and uncomfortable. Heavy wool is delightful at fifty degrees and very hot at eighty. Dehydration is common. Jackets do not completely dry out before nightfall. You go to bed on the ground, wet. It is dangerous. A young artilleryman next to me stuck his hand in a pouch full of primers, setting off two; stunned, he counted five bloody fingers, still attached, and stumbled off to the ambulance. A forty-eight-year-old infantryman died of a heart attack in the Cornfield.

One other thing. When thousands of men (and women, many in uniform) put their minds toward a single object, the resulting performance art is at once instructional and breathtaking. Spectators can see how armies moved—how fast, and with what degree of cohesion, how a smaller, organized body slamming into a larger mob could cause a rout. When shells go off (they used first-rate ground charges at Antietam) and units approach, say, Bloody Lane, it is easier to imagine

the terror of being locked into a killing zone and to appreciate the character required to withstand it. An army chief of staff recently visited Antietam's "Sunken Road" and commented that you couldn't get American troops to make that assault today.

Evening brings a quiet beauty. Ask a reenactor what his favorite part of the day is and he'll say six o'clock, after the spectators leave "and we have the camp to ourselves." Gun crews and infantry outfits sit around their cook fires (where Cousin Ed worked some magic on smoked—food is unrefrigerated—meat and fresh vegetables) and drink coffee to ward off the creeping chill. Old friends visit, recalling other "battles," other times. Men crawl off to sleep; the fortunate will have to rise for guard duty. The sight of sentries around a campfire at four in the morning is memorable, perhaps unforgettable.

On Sunday, September 14, 1997, at approximately 6:15 A.M., a few hundred spectators watched as seventeen thousand reenactors refought the Cornfield, the bloodiest thirty acres in American history. It was still dark when the artillery commenced firing. The infantry went in at first light, passing around us and into the mist like ghosts. We in the artillery could not fire or even see, but we heard their shouts and volleys as the lines met. Behind us, deep in the smoke, the sun rose blood red.

When it cleared, dazed reenactors emerging from a cornfield cleared of stalks grinned at one another. "If I died today I'd die a happy man," some said. In fact, they'd just about made that leap back in time. For about twenty seconds there, I'd have to say it was pretty close. Amen, brother.

R.I.C.

Cover

Cochran-Oler Ice Company, Cedar Grove, Maine, 1885

Ice harvested from Maine's freshwater rivers kept Baltimoreans cool during blistering summer days in the late nineteenth century. During Maine's long and frigid winters, horse-drawn plows scored the ice fields into what looked like great checkerboards with three-foot squares. Workers then finished the harvest using crowbars, pulleys, and ropes, loading the ice into warehouses and onto southbound ships. Ice arrived in Baltimore packed in sawdust and straw to be stored in waterfront icehouses with ice cut from the harbor and local rivers. City families bought fourteen-pound blocks for a nickel from the neighborhood iceman's horse-drawn cart. In 1901 the Cochran-Oler Ice Company merged with companies from Washington, D.C., and Maine to form the American Ice Company, which thrived until the 1920s, when artificial ice made from the city's pure water system replaced the natural item. Baltimoreans still kept icemen in business until after World War II, when home ice boxes gave way to electric refrigerators.

P.D.A.

Parents and young children protest before Baltimore City School headquarters, May 31, 1974. (Baltimore News-American *staff photograph, University of Maryland, College Park.)*

Baltimore's Public Schools in a Time of Transition

EDWARD BERKOWITZ

On the 3800 block of Juniper Road, no one cares about the fate of the Baltimore city schools for the simple reason that not one of the families sends its children to them. The families choose expensive private schools, such as Friends or Bryn Mawr, over free public schools. This choice has important consequences for the city of Baltimore. None of the people on the block is a stakeholder in the public school system, depriving the schools of influential advocates who might intercede in the political and budgetary processes to argue for increased school spending. Instead, the residents of Juniper Road complain bitterly about high tax rates. Most of these residents are on the edge of white flight. They eye surrounding Baltimore County as a place with both lower taxes and better schools. What deters these people from moving is not a commitment to urban life so much as the fear that they will not be able to sell their houses. Potential buyers know that they will not only have to pay high city taxes but also very high tuition bills for their children. The cost of tuition discourages many people with children from moving to Baltimore.

As historians, we know that education was once one of the prized services that distinguished cities such as Baltimore from rural areas. But little more than two decades ago demographic realities combined with public policies to produce a crisis from which the schools have never recovered. The events of 1974, in particular, tarnished the reputation of a school system that had once been among the nation's best.

David Weglein served as superintendent of Baltimore's schools from 1925 to 1946, a length of tenure that would be simply impossible in the modern era. He presided over a growing school system in a placid atmosphere. The year after his arrival the city opened a record number of schools, a situation that Weglein described as "epoch making." Weglein himself strove to put the Baltimore school curriculum in line with progressive principles and, in general, "to improve the efficiency of classroom instruction." It went without comment that throughout Weglein's tenure the city schools remained solidly segregated and honored traditional conventions with regard to gender. In the junior high schools, newly configured to include grades seven through nine, boys learned mechanical drawing and woodwork, and girls received lessons in cookery and housekeeping.[1]

Ed Berkowitz teaches at George Washington University and writes on the history of social welfare policy.

These conventions were the norm and went unremarked, yet in a school system that enjoyed wide participation from a broad array of the city's citizens, not everyone defended the principle of racial segregation, particularly in the years following the Second World War. In the early 1950s prominent members of the school board such as Walter Sondheim, a businessman who would later play a major role in Baltimore's renaissance, did what they could to end segregation in the city schools. Despite the reality of racial segregation, students in Baltimore's public schools absorbed the era's optimistic rhetoric about cultural pluralism and ethnic assimilation.

One could sense this optimism in their writings. Just before the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education,* a group of students drawn from senior high schools across Baltimore participated in a special social studies project—they wrote a book about Baltimore. Published under the revealing title *Baltimore: City of Promise,* the book reflected the liberal sentiments of the era. Students from all-black, academically oriented Douglass High School wrote that "diversity of population and race is actually one of [democracy's] strong sustaining factors." The students explained that "where Negroes enjoy equal opportunities there are no real differences in mental ability between the two groups." Indeed, racial prejudice was "not only inconsistent with the principles of religion but is also inimical to democracy itself." The nation's racial and religious groups were like the "choirs of instruments in a symphony orchestra," all playing harmoniously.

The same book matter-of-factly noted that nearly all of the city's churches were segregated.[2] The students chosen to write on education pointed with pride to the development of City, Poly, Douglass, and Western high schools; they also reported that of the city's nine high schools, seven were white and two were "colored." Although the students chose not to highlight it, an alert reader could discover that segregation extended to the remotest regions of the school system. Even the schools for the physically handicapped featured the William S. Baer School for white children and the Francis W. Wood School for colored children.[3]

As one might expect from a system with a relative tolerance for the idea, if not the practice, of integration, the Baltimore schools took the *Brown* decision with relative good grace. The school board moved quickly to eliminate race as a consideration in assigning students to particular schools. "It was something we knew we had to do, so we just did it," said Sondheim.[4] Drawing on what might be described as the shadow legacy of tolerance, the superintendent pointed to the fact that Baltimore's schools already had considerable experience in integrated education. He cited such things as interracial staff workshops, visits between white and black schools, integrated adult education programs, and the fact that black students had been admitted to Poly in 1952 (on the rationale that nothing comparable to Poly's technical education existed for black students). Civil rights leaders, Roy Wilkins of the NAACP among them, applauded the

Baltimore schools responded well to the Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education *but did not immediately desegregate. Here, the all-white student body at Baltimore City College photographed in 1953. (Maryland Historical Society.)*

Baltimore schools as a model for other cities to follow.[5] Primed by the city's business and professional elite, Baltimore became one of those "border" school systems that complied with *Brown* with a minimum of fuss.[6] In 1961 the U.S. Civil Rights Commission noted that Baltimore was the nation's only southern city to have complied with *Brown.*[7]

Letting Go

However laudable the decision to open all of the city schools to blacks may have been, it failed to end the problem of racial segregation. In 1963 fifty-three of the city's 189 schools still had all-white faculties, and sixty-seven schools had faculties that were all-black.[8]

Complicating the problem of integration, difficult in itself, was the fact that independent of the *Brown* decision the city and its school system soon reached a number of critical racial tipping points. In 1955, the year after *Brown,* 60 percent of the students were white, but by September 1960 more blacks than whites attended Baltimore's schools. Accompanying this shift in population were major

changes in the racial composition of individual schools. Clifton Park Junior High School had only thirty-four black students just after desegregation and only twelve white students by the middle of the 1960s.[9]

Other demographic changes adversely affected the schools. During the 1970s, for example, the city lost 13 percent of its population, mostly to the suburbs. Blacks became a majority of the city population in the mid-1970s and a majority of the city's voters in 1980. At the same time, the disparity between the white and black student populations continued to grow. By 1974, 70 percent of the public school students in Baltimore were black; by 1980 the figure was close to 80 percent. Baltimore had become a black city with a declining population and, beginning in September 1970, declining enrollment in a heavily black school system.[10]

Public policies also affected the schools. In particular, two events of the 1960s provided the impetus for the confrontations of the 1970s. The first of these, passage of a comprehensive civil rights law, occurred in 1964. The thrust of the law was to ban racial discrimination in hiring and firing workers, but the law also contained a little noticed title that prohibited racial discrimination in activities that were supported by the federal government.[11] The second event occurred a year later, when Congress passed an aid to education law that supplied local school districts with federal financial support. Proposed in the late 1940s as a means to supplement teacher salaries and build new schools, the measure emerged in 1965 as a way of aiding children who lived in conditions of poverty.[12]

These laws emerged after long legislative struggles that had little to do with Baltimore, though both appeared to work to Baltimore's advantage. Title I of the aid to education law, which based the allocation of money on the number of poor children in a particular district, proved to be a particular boon to the city. Federal funds, which had begun to reach the public schools by 1966, became an important part of the city's school budget. By the 1971–72 school year, Baltimore received 11 percent of its school budget from federal funds. Forty-two percent of those funds came from Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; the next largest category was the federal school lunch program.[13]

City and federal authorities disagreed on how to spend the federal funds. Although the bulk of the funds were explicitly intended to expand the city's educational offerings and provide what the educators called "compensatory" education, the money actually became a basic part of the city's operating budget. Aware of this fact, federal legislators passed amendments that attempted to insure that federal funds "supplement, not supplant" local funds. In fact, how the funds were used was difficult to audit.[14] Baltimore continued to spend them as general aid to education, even when the federal government tried to force the city to use them only for the activities authorized by Congress. In 1978 for example, federal auditors claimed that $14.6 million in federal funds were mis-

spent on such things as hiring library staff and paying for personnel in the district's business office.[15]

The growth of federal funds constituted just one of the changes in financing that affected the Baltimore city school system during the 1960s and 1970s and increased its dependency on external sources. As the local property tax base declined, as it naturally did in a city with a declining population and a rising poverty rate, local revenues ceased to be the major means of funding the schools. Between 1970 and 1975, at the same time that the city was becoming more dependent on federal aid, state revenues bypassed local taxes as a source of school operating funds.[16] That meant that the city was responsible to both the state and federal governments for the conduct of its schools at a time when the reputation of those schools had begun to decline.

In the 1970s the Baltimore city schools began to attract unwelcome notice from critics who charged they were unsafe and ineffective, criticisms not unrelated to the fact that Baltimore was becoming a black city. The *Baltimore Sun*, an important molder of public opinion that had once carried uplifting stories about the schools' accomplishments, began running stories on racial conflict in classrooms and hallways. The effect was to heighten middle-class fears, primarily among whites, that the schools were in serious decline.

The decade began with an outbreak of violence. Eastern High School, located across from Memorial Stadium on 33rd Street, was one of the schools that had gone from all-white to perhaps four-fifths black by 1970. The racial composition of the faculty had failed to change as fast as that of the student body, with the result that nearly 80 percent of the teachers were white. On February 12, 1970, a disturbance occurred after a white teacher used a racial epithet in addressing one of the black students at the all-female school. Police arrived, arrested eleven girls, and charged them with disorderly conduct. Some observers claimed that the police used mace in making the arrests. The "melée" that resulted soon spread into the streets and reached the student body of nearby (all-male) City College High School. Authorities closed both Eastern and City for the day.[17]

The situation soon escalated. Students at Eastern and City responded to the arrests with a boycott of classes the next day. Administrators decided to station security guards in Eastern High School. The next week more than one hundred black students staged a sit-in at Baltimore Polytechnic's cafeteria. Police arrested them. At Forest Park High School some of the students, angered by the incidents at Eastern, "ran through the hall smashing furniture and breaking windows." Before the police could quell that disturbance, students "ripped out the school's telephone lines."[18] Later that same day students demonstrated at City Hall and at school headquarters.

Nor did those incidents end the violence. In April a fight occurred in front

of William H. Lemmel Junior High School. Police had been called after receiving reports that teenagers armed with sticks had threatened teachers. As the police attempted to disperse the crowd that had gathered in front of the school, some of the teenagers began to throw rocks. Two policemen sustained injuries, and six patrol cars were damaged. In the same month fires that authorities believed to have been deliberately set broke out at Forest Park and Douglass. Mayor Thomas D'Alesandro worried that such incidents might lead voters to reject the school bond issue. Other political leaders, including William Donald Schaefer, demanded that more police, equipped with dogs, be brought into the schools to protect against arsonists.[19]

Profoundly local in nature, the disturbances in the Baltimore public schools also formed part of a more general national pattern. The spring of 1970 marked the height of clashes between students and school authorities in all sections of the country and at all levels of education. Just as classes were suspended at Forest Park and Eastern, so too were they cancelled at Princeton and Harvard. But considered strictly as a local matter, the disturbances reflected a revolt of the majority black student body against the still largely white power structure. Well aware that the mayor and the superintendent of schools were white, the students sensed that city institutions, in particular the schools and the police force, lacked racial sensitivity. Well-publicized national incidents gave them cues for highlighting racial grievances in discussions with local authorities.

Meanwhile, Baltimore's political leaders were in conflict over its response. They realized they had to appeal to black voters if they expected to survive in Baltimore politics but also knew only too well that they had to hold on to their white power base if they were to be re-elected. Although there were more white voters than black at the time, it took little imagination to see that the electorate would soon be majority black.

Whatever the reasons for the racial outbreaks, they served to raise barriers between whites and blacks. More ominously, they fed the steady decline in white enrollment. Black enrollment continued to increase—at a very modest rate—until September 1974.[20]

Schaefer Bound

If 1970 was bad, 1974 was much worse. Two events that occurred almost simultaneously that year had a catastrophic effect on the Baltimore public schools. In a volatile era that witnessed the resignation of a president and an oil shock that plunged the nation into a severe recession, the Baltimore city schools experienced a teachers' strike and a major confrontation over desegregation.

Roland N. Patterson, Baltimore's first black superintendent of schools, arrived from Seattle to begin his tenure late in 1971. By January 1974 he felt secure

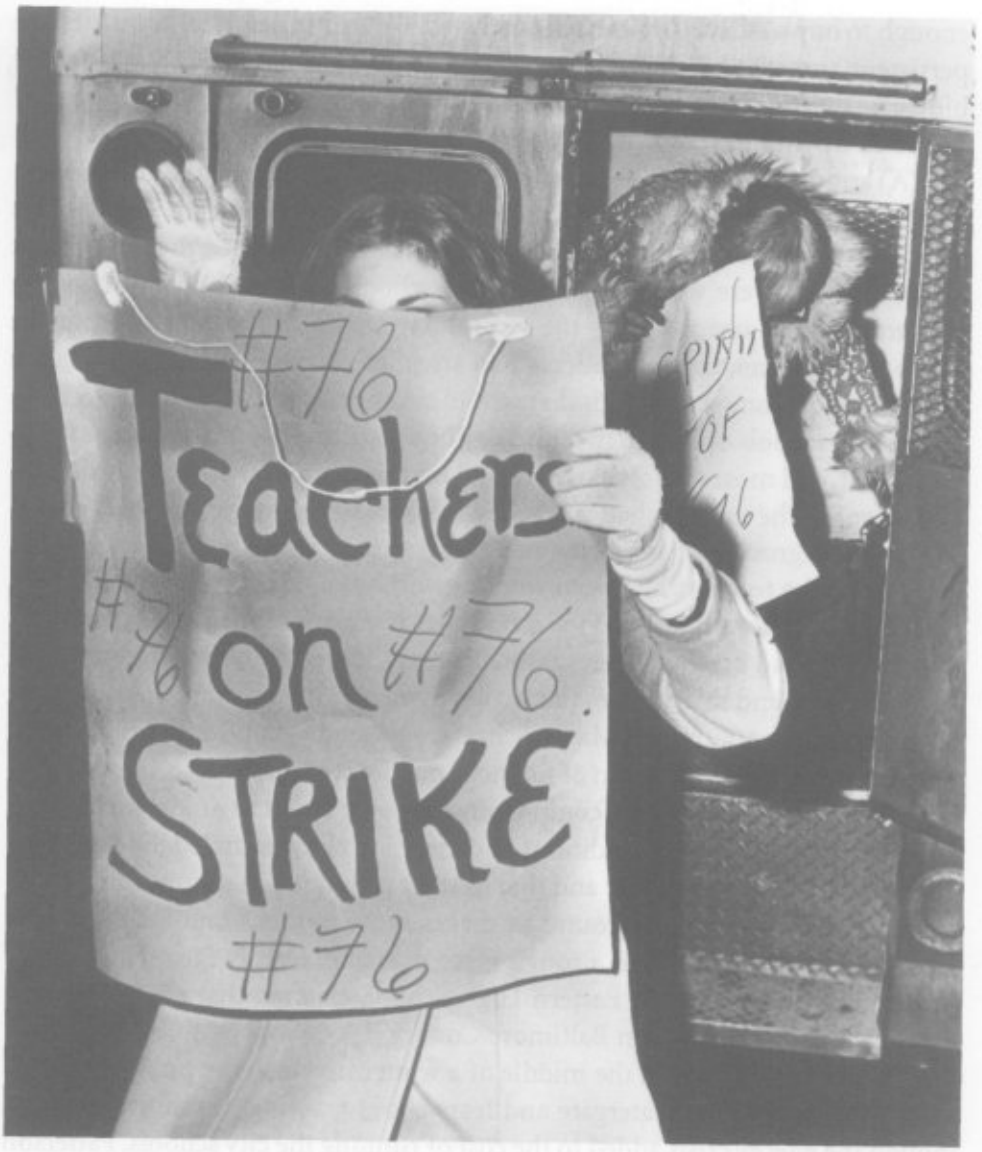
enough to buy a $65,000 house in a northwest Baltimore neighborhood, despite persistent rumors that Schaefer, who had become mayor in 1971, would fire him. The mayor maintained that he had no intentions of letting Patterson go.[21]

Then on Monday, February 4, 1974, the Public School Teachers Association (PSTA) announced that its members had gone on strike against the city schools. Although the circuit court issued an injunction against the strike, the teachers decided to ignore it. City authorities optimistically announced that 90 percent of the teachers were working and that the schools remained open. Reporters challenged these assertions. By the second day of the strike, the city admitted that only 29 percent of the students had attended classes. At some schools the rate of absenteeism was so high that school authorities questioned the decision to keep the schools open. On the third day of the strike, school attendance fell to 16 percent, and most schools closed early. Less than a quarter of the staff showed up for work. The teachers had succeeded in shutting down the system.[22]

The background of the strike resembled that of many public sector labor disputes.[23] The teachers had been working without a contract for the 1973–74 school year. In November 1973 the state superintendent of schools declared that negotiations had reached an impasse. Teachers hoped to obtain a package of fringe benefits and salary raises that represented an 11 percent increase over the previous contract, although Mayor Schaefer repeatedly emphasized that such a contract was beyond the realm of financial possibility. In response, teachers carried out their threat to strike, complaining not only about their low salaries but also about poor working conditions and crowded classrooms. Many noted the differential between their pay and that of their colleagues in surrounding Baltimore County. "Everybody around us makes more money," said Sabra Kone, a school librarian. "The city is a rough place to teach." Jean E. Stegman, head of the English department at Eastern High School, claimed that she could earn $4,000 more if she taught in Baltimore County.[24]

The strike occurred in the middle of a winter in which the public was consumed by news about Watergate and fears about growing gas shortages. Even though the energy crisis added to the cost of running the city schools, Patterson vowed to keep them open. He realized that the level of instruction was less than satisfactory during the strike but added, "we're operating as good a program as we're capable of under the circumstances." Patterson sympathized with the teachers. "For two and a half years," he said, "I have said that the school system is underfinanced." He noted that the lack of supplies and overcrowded conditions added to teachers' frustrations. Still, the schools had to remain open for a reason totally unrelated to the pattern of labor relations. Were the schools to close, the city might not recover money from the state and federal governments.[25]

Two weeks into the strike, the city made another offer that, at the suggestion of the PSTA, the teachers rejected. Karl Boone, president of the association, an-



Striking teachers emerge from a police patrol wagon after being arrested, February 22, 1974. (Baltimore News-American *staff photograph, University of Maryland, College Park.)*

nounced that "we want to close down every school in Baltimore city." Tensions mounted as principals, school security officers, and city police escorted teachers and students past the picket lines. Five teachers were arrested for blocking the entrance to Northwestern High School. At Lake Clifton, where thirty-one of their number were arrested, teachers locked arms and sang, "We Shall Overcome." Six Walbrook High teachers had their tires slashed, and one faculty mem-

Baltimore teachers union members rally in front of City Hall, February 28, 1974. (Photograph by Paul Whyte, Baltimore News-American, *University of Maryland, College Park.)*

ber who refused to join the strike woke up one morning to discover the word "scab" painted on the windshield of his car.[26]

Sensing that the public's sympathies lay with the strikers, Mayor Schaefer hesitated to criticize the teachers, but as the strike continued, he and the members of his administration appealed to the middle class for support. They stressed the relationship between the teachers' contract and the tax rate. To accede to the teachers' demands would mean that other unions would seek similar raises, and the result would be a large increase in the tax rate. That would put the city at a greater disadvantage compared to the county, hasten the departure of more whites, lower the tax base still further, and lead to more white flight and even higher tax rates. The city therefore had to hold the line. City labor commissioner Robert S. Hillman compared Baltimore's high tax rate to those in surrounding counties. "Increased wages could mean even higher taxes," he warned. Schaefer thought the tax rate might rise from $5.83 to $6.78. "People are beginning to see the financial crunch we're in."

Schaefer simultaneously appealed to the teachers and to the city's middle-

class citizens. He wanted the teachers to return to work and to recognize that the city faced nearly insurmountable problems caused by what he described in a letter to the teachers as "socio-economic conditions" that would take "many years of hard work and dedication to reverse." He pointed out that the city contained about a fifth of the state's population but nearly two-thirds of its welfare caseload. "What am I going to do?" he asked a *Sun* reporter while holding up a copy of the budget and wondering aloud which of its items could be cut. Baltimoreans, he argued, would not countenance a property tax increase. "Boy, they'd holler bloody-murder. And they'd move out of the city. . . . You can have the rich, and you can have the poor, but it's the middle class who keep the city together."[27] If he gave in to the teachers, Schaefer feared, the middle class would flee in greater numbers. Here, for perhaps the first time, the costs of middle-class white alienation from the school system became apparent. The interests of the teachers and of the school system were diverging from those of the largely white middle class.

Schaefer found a sympathetic ear in the *Sun*, which ran an editorial portraying the school strike as an urban disgrace, a sign that the city was in disarray. The strike undermined the quality of city life and compromised Baltimore's future at the precise moment when long gas lines were playing havoc with the routines of most city inhabitants. At the end of February the *Sun* plaintively noted that the "school year is running out."[28]

By that time, after the circuit court had imposed fines of $16,000 a day on Karl Boone and the teachers' union, the impasse in the strike had begun to ease. On the last day of the month, William J. Usery Jr., director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, entered the negotiations. Attendance in city schools had slumped to 8 percent, and only a handful of teachers were coming to work. Among those staying away was the tenth-grade son of Superintendent Roland Patterson.

Early in March teachers reached a tentative agreement with the city that featured a 6 percent wage increase. The leadership of the Public School Teachers Association declared an end to the strike on Monday, March 4, despite the fact that teachers had rejected the contract by a margin of seventy-four votes. On March 5 teachers and students returned to work. "It's almost as if the last month hadn't occurred," said one principal.[29] Superintendent Patterson, using the sort of psychological rhetoric common in the field of education, talked about the "high level of anxiety" and "frustration" the year had produced. He hoped to cope with the "dysfunctional behavior" by training thirty-six regional staff development specialists in "change agentry."

Patterson's Rip Van Winkle-esque observation glossed over the fact that much had changed. Nor were the problems amenable to solution through the superintendent's psychobabble about "change agentry." Rancor over the strike undermined the position of the PSTA to bargain on behalf of the teachers, many of

whom felt betrayed by a union that had led them into a strike that won little in return for the hardship of going four weeks without pay. Some politicians reflected the public's anger toward teachers and the schools. John T. Gallagher, a delegate to the state legislature from Baltimore, introduced a measure to abolish the city school board and to put the management of the city's schools firmly in the hands of the mayor and city council. That sparked the anger of the four black members of the city school board, who saw in Gallagher's bill an attack on a system that, with a black superintendent and a majority-black student population, was increasingly regarded as a black institution. "This is about as racist and blatant as you can get," said James M. Griffin, the board's vice president. Larry S. Gibson, another black school board member, saw the bill as part of a "concerted conspiracy."[30]

Indeed, the entire episode of the school strike could be read as a betrayal of the city's blacks by the entrenched white political leadership. The city hesitated to spend more money on the school system for fear of making Baltimore, already on the verge of a black majority, even more black. Preservation of the property tax rate in an effort to maintain a good business climate triumphed over a proper concern for the education of the city's school children. In this view, the strike only highlighted the need to replace the city's white leaders with a new group of black leaders, as indeed happened in 1987 when, due in large part to the political skills of Larry Gibson, Kurt L. Schmoke was elected mayor.

Even Schaefer seemed to sense that these politicians were right: The schools belonged to the blacks and should be regarded as an object of black patronage. This perception reinforced Schaefer's inclination to maintain his distance from the schools. As political scientist Marion Orr observed, Schaefer regarded the schools as a "political land mine" and left their administration "to trusted associates on the school board and black administrators who owed their appointment to the city."[31] The mayor attempted to take the schools out of the spotlight and to highlight the urban renaissance instead.

The trouble was that completion of the renaissance inevitably required the rebirth of the city schools. The 1974 strike, true to the fears of Schaefer and his administration, only hastened the process of white flight and brought further deterioration to the schools. As Mike Bowler rather gently stated in his short history of the Baltimore school system, "thousands of whites left the schools in 1974 and 1975."[32]

Patterson's Complaint

Catastrophic as the strike was, it marked only the first of the school system's two major crises in 1974. The second crisis involved a federal mandate that Baltimore produce a desegregation plan, a mandate which further exposed racial tensions within the system and highlighted the intractability of its problems.

After the *Brown* decision, the city had settled into a durable pattern of racial separation based on the earlier system of total segregation. Most elementary school students went to schools close to their homes, leading to a high degree of racial separation. Although the system permitted more flexibility at the upper levels, the enrollment patterns continued to reflect the housing patterns of what was essentially a highly segregated city. Baltimore's department of education did what it could to change the situation by creating a series of magnet high schools intended to draw students from all over the city, but these fell short of altering the prevailing pattern.

The courts eventually caught up with Baltimore. After the *Brown* decision, nothing much was expected except that the city maintain an enrollment policy that did not overtly discriminate against blacks. As years passed, the courts began to examine results rather than possibilities. Pressing the sociological if not the legal reasoning of *Brown,* the courts asked whether any school remained all black or all white. Over time they modified this inquiry and began to question whether the racial balance in individual schools reflected that of the school system at large. If in Baltimore a ratio of seven black to three white students prevailed, the courts expected individual schools not to deviate very far from that ratio.[33]

At the time of *Brown,* invoking the courts' displeasure held very few consequences. In the 1970s failure to desegregate carried penalties that resulted from federal policies of the 1960s. Since Baltimore's schools received substantial federal funds as a result of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, they came under the domain of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited discrimination in entities that received federal funds. The penalty could reach as far as a withdrawal of federal money, a disastrous possibility in the financially pinched atmosphere of 1974. Baltimore's schools had to please federal officials or suffer a 10 percent budget cut; that might in turn evoke the displeasure of state officials and lead to still more cuts. Laws that had brought what seemed to be unambiguous benefit to Baltimore in the 1960s had different connotations a decade later.

The Nixon administration had little sympathy for court intervention into the affairs of local school districts, but could exert little influence over the courts, which increasingly saw themselves as chancellors of equity at a time when the legislative branch could no longer easily effect social change through expansive legislation.[34] Moreover, important parts of the federal bureaucracy, such as the Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, believed strongly in upholding court decisions and implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Lawyers in these offices exercised considerable autonomy, whatever the policies of the administration. Furthermore, the Nixon administration owed little or nothing to cities such as Baltimore, and the rage and social dislo-

cation that might accompany a desegregation order could in fact work to the administration's advantage.

With these mixed motivations, Peter E. Holmes, the young lawyer who headed HEW's Office of Civil Rights, wrote to Superintendent Roland Patterson in April 1973. Holmes informed Patterson of the Supreme Court's recent decision in the case of *Adams v. Richardson,* which required HEW to communicate with Baltimore and other local school districts and put "them on notice to rebut or explain the substantial racial disproportion" in Baltimore's schools. Holmes ordered Patterson to come up with data on the racial balance in each of the system's schools. He also reminded Patterson of the 1971 decision in *Swann v. Charlotte Mecklenberg,* which warranted "a presumption against schools that are substantially disproportionate in their racial composition."[35]

Patterson did his best to stall. In a June 1973 reply to Holmes, he tried to present the Baltimore situation in the best possible light—he blamed racial segregation on demography. "Shifting population trends . . . thwart [the city's] best efforts," he wrote. Patterson worried that since the city seemed "to be moving toward an almost totally black system, the School Board and staff have grave feelings that mandatory movements of pupils will hasten the progress of the flight of whites from the city, thereby increasing the socio-economic problems that now beset the city." Instead of working on school integration directly, the school system was concentrating on measures that "will halt the relentless pattern of population change from white to black." As proof of the changes, Patterson pointed to the case of City College High School, which was all-white in 1953 and 97 percent nonwhite in 1972.[36]

Federal officials did not reach a decision on Baltimore until the winter of 1974. Then, in the middle of the school strike and the energy crisis, Holmes wrote to Patterson that, "On the basis of the data available . . . I have concluded that further desegregation of the Baltimore City Schools is necessary and desirable." Holmes noted that most of the schools that had been segregated prior to Brown remained racially identifiable, that the city's policy of open enrollment had not been effective, and that the teaching staff remained segregated. In the brusque manner of federal regulators, Holmes gave Patterson only thirty days to come up with a desegregation plan.[37]

On February 16, 1974, on what might have been the single worst day in the history of the Baltimore city schools, news reached the public that the federal government had ordered the city to remove the last vestiges of its segregated school system.[38] The story failed to create an immediate stir because the city was still coping with the school strike and with long gas lines. In addition the kidnapping of Patty Hearst, in what appeared to be a last echo of the Sixties, also diverted the public's attention. Nonetheless, the city somehow had to respond to the deadline the federal government had imposed.

Patterson used the strike as a pretext to gain time. He told Holmes, "the welfare of 186,000 school children is dependent upon a settlement of the labor problems which have resulted in the strikes." Holmes extended the deadline but only slightly. The city had until the end of April to come up with a plan.

On February 21, Patterson had a dialogue with the Board of School Commissioners, as the school board was formally known, that underscored the need for the city to act on the matter of desegregation. Patterson did not want to submit a desegregation plan, arguing that the city had already maximized the integration of its schools. Further moves would only lead to a decline in the city's tax base and an increase in social alienation. The energy crisis also mitigated against taking action. "How can we possibly talk about putting additional buses on the street," he asked, "when we drive past the long lines of automobiles waiting at service stations?"

If Patterson, the city's first black superintendent, took a line that might have come from President Nixon, the school commissioners were quick to remind him that he did not have the luxury of ignoring the federal order. The simple reason was that the city received more than $16 million from the federal government. As board member Larry Gibson put it, the city could not afford to lose those funds. He added that the law required integration and the city risked having its school system taken over by the courts. For all those reasons, the school board directed Patterson to prepare a desegregation plan and to organize a community-based desegregation task force.[39]

As Patterson had predicted, desegregation became a highly controversial matter in the spring of 1974. The superintendent continued to hope that students in junior and senior high schools would be allowed to attend the schools of their choice. But he did not explain how such an open enrollment policy would alter the racial composition of the fourteen all- or nearly all-white schools in the system, including Patterson High School, located near the white ethnic neighborhoods of East Baltimore and 92 percent white. Federal authorities who addressed the desegregation task force noted that "massive busing" would not be required.[40]

"Busing," a term that was almost always used derogatively, served as the shorthand symbol for the desegregation effort. Busing implied that children would be moved from one section of the city to another, that they would leave the comfortable confines of their own community and confront the alien culture of another. Whites in particular felt threatened. A thousand people, nearly all of them white, packed a desegregation task force meeting and shouted their opposition to busing elementary school students. "I will not stand for busing. I will take my children out of public school," said Louella Welch. "You've got to go against this busing," warned another parent, "because if you don't you are going to lose your kids and they are going to get hurt." Still another said that she was raised in the city, "but if my elementary school children are bused out of my

Angry Baltimore students and parents protest federally ordered busing in front of school board headquarters on 25th Street, May 31, 1974. (Baltimore News-American *staff photograph, University of Maryland, College Park.)*

neighborhood by force my husband and I will sell our house and move to Baltimore County." Among the sympathetic white politicians in attendance was Councilwoman Barbara Mikulski.[41]

Embroiled in controversy over such heated issues as the forced busing of elementary school children, the desegregation task force could not agree on a single plan to recommend to the school board. The board begged the federal authorities for more time. Not until May 29, 1974, did the board unveil its plan, which involved a complicated arrangement to pair certain schools at the elementary level and to extend the magnet arrangement for senior high schools. The board noted that it operated under political constraints such as those imposed by Mayor Schaefer, who insisted that elementary students not be bused to schools that were more than a mile from their homes.[42]

Even the board's relatively mild plan met with considerable resistance. Students from Mergenthaler Vocational School picketed in front of city hall, protesting the proposed merger of their school with Carver Vocational School. Mergenthaler had a roughly equal balance of white and black students; Carver

Demonstrators move up Calvert Street to school headquarters on May 31, 1974, their mood ranging "from militant to jubilant" according to the News-American. *(*Baltimore News-American *staff photograph, University of Maryland, College Park.)*

contained only blacks. "Hell no, we won't go," chanted the Mergenthaler students. The next day students from Patterson High took up the same chant, picketing city hall and protesting the plan to turn Patterson into a magnet school. Although the students complained about busing, the fact was that most of them already used buses to get to Patterson. Throughout the system, nearly a third of the students used public transportation to get to school. Still, the threat of change blended with the usual end-of-the-year restlessness to create a series of marches on city hall and school administration headquarters. The academic year, already marred by the strike, ended with students missing still more class time to protest against the desegregation plan.[43]

In the face of these protests, the school board retreated from its initial plan. It voted against making Patterson a magnet school, in part because of pressure from politicians like city comptroller Hyman Pressman. "The federal government has put a gun to our head and the Patterson plan would pull the trigger," argued Pressman, who then urged the city not to submit any desegregation plan. On June 4, 1974, in a bitterly divisive meeting, the school board reduced from twenty-seven to fourteen the number of elementary schools that were to be paired in order to improve racial balance. They also adopted a plan that would limit the number of junior high school students who would be moved from one area of the city to another and approved what the *Sun* described as a "vaguely worded senior high school plan." Larry Gibson labelled the new plan "a farce" that federal authorities would surely reject. Mrs. M. Richmond Faring, a white member of the board who represented the interests of largely white South Baltimore, invited HEW either to accept the plan or to "drop dead."[44]

The fight over school desegregation marked the unsatisfactory end of an unsatisfying academic year. Nearly everyone knew that more trouble lay ahead. If HEW rejected the plan, Mayor Schaefer would sue; if HEW approved the plan, the NAACP would sue. Most observers thought it unlikely that HEW would accept the plan and hoped the disarray within the Nixon administration would delay HEW from taking action.[45]

Patterson lasted only another year as superintendent. He and Mayor Schaefer had a showdown meeting on Labor Day, 1974. As the two talked, pickets demonstrated outside protesting the "feeder" plan for junior high schools that, according to Mike Bowler, "put an end to the concept that junior and senior high school students could attend the school of their choice."[46] The meeting erupted into a shouting match with the result that Patterson lost the mayor's confidence. The following summer Patterson was gone.

The History Lesson

Events of 1970 and 1974 illustrated aspects of the Baltimore school system's transformation from white to black. Disturbances in 1970 showed the high degree of racial tension within the schools at a time when most of the students were black and most of the teachers white. The disruptions sent a signal to middle-class residents that they could not expect the schools to perform the same way in the 1970s as they had in the previous decades. If education was truly "the nexus of generational change," the "dynamic mechanism by which economic level is passed on from one generation to the next," as policymakers believed it was in the 1960s, then it was important for middle-class parents to find high quality schools for their children.[47] The Baltimore schools appeared to be failing that test.

The 1974 strike indicated that teachers shared the frustrations of middle-class parents. Although teachers were supposed to act as agents of change in an increasingly complex world, the city failed to comprehend the difficulty of their task. It appeared to them that the city was unwilling to spend the necessary money to fund quality schools. The city, for its part, was trapped by the economic stringency of the era. More money for education meant higher taxes, which translated into more middle-class flight, which would mean still less money for education. The only solution was to appeal to outside authorities in Washington and Annapolis to come to the city's aid.

The desegregation order demonstrated that all external aid came with strings. If the city received federal help, it had to comply with federal mandates, including the elimination of segregated schools. Although city authorities sympathized with this goal in the abstract, they saw desegregation as another variation on a zero-sum game. Correcting segregation at one place, like Patterson High School, meant disrupting the racial balance at another. The more the city tinkered with mechanisms to produce racial integration—a concept that could only mean ra-

cially proportionate schools in a school system that was 70 percent black—the more it risked losing its white, middle-class residents. If those residents left the city or withdrew their children from the schools, the situation could only worsen. It seemed therefore that the city faced a tragic dilemma—accepting federal funds in the short term appeared to mean imperiling the city's future.

The 1970s, a decade of slow economic growth, was a period of much harder choices than the preceding twenty years. In the 1970s, unlike the 1960s, the federal government imposed mandates on localities without providing the financial means for the localities to fulfill those mandates. In the 1970s, unlike the 1950s, the federal government acted against the wishes of local leaders with regard to racial integration. The *Brown* decision provided the impetus for the city to take steps that many people already favored; the court decisions of the 1970s forced the city to take steps with which many people disagreed. In the 1950s the court was the vehicle of progressive change; in the 1970s it was widely regarded as insensitive to local conditions.

The three incidents described here are only snapshots in the process of long-term social change. In a historiographic sense, they show the impossibility of writing the social history of Baltimore and its schools without reference to federal policies. In this case, writing history from the bottom up requires a close knowledge of history from the top down.

In a more local sense, these incidents illustrate some of the reasons that the residents of the 3800 block of Juniper Road view the Baltimore city school system with indifference and occasional disdain. Once a source of great civic pride, the schools no longer unite the city.

NOTES

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A Perilous Climb to Social Eminence: Dr. Alexander Hamilton And His Creditors

ELAINE G. BRESLAW

Dr. Alexander Hamilton, the author of the *Itinerarium*, the founder of the Annapolis Tuesday Club and an early American wit and promoter of a serious musical culture, arrived in Maryland from Edinburgh, Scotland, via London during the winter of 1738–39.[1] He was a prolific letter writer but, unfortunately, much of that correspondence has disappeared. The Maryland Historical Society is the repository of the largest part of the extant correspondence, but there are also some letters in Scottish archives.[2] Recently indexed volumes in the New College Library of the University of Edinburgh contain ten more letters written by Hamilton and the final copy of the draft of a letter in the Maryland Historical Society collection. Five of those New College Library letters to his brothers in Scotland—four to Robert and one to Gavin—are published here for the first time.[3] These letters provide fresh information about Dr. Hamilton's adaptation to the new world.

When the twenty-six-year-old Scotsman arrived in Maryland, he had little, possibly no, money of his own; his father had died six years before, and his mother had other children to support from her small income. He left a still poor Scotland that offered few opportunities for a young man with his education, ambition, and skills.[4] America was to be his land of opportunity. He eventually succeeded both personally and professionally, but his progress from impecunious immigrant to wealth and social position has not attracted scholarly interest. Few sources exist that might explain his rise and, after all, the gaps in Hamilton's story support the American mythology of success that hard work and grit and individual initiative were the paths to material betterment.[5] But in Alexander's case, at least, it took more; his ascendance depended upon considerable familial support from the other side of the Atlantic.

Letters in the Maryland Historical Society collection reveal that at the beginning he complained bitterly of how difficult it was to become rich. His dissatisfaction has usually been attributed to poor health because such was the focus of the correspondence in that Maryland collection.[6] But the letters in New College Library tell a different story, indicating that his primary concern was

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Dr. Alexander Hamilton spent his first years in Maryland working his way upward in colonial society. (Maryland Historical Society, MS 854.)

lack of money. He worried about locating sources of credit with which to pay his bills and securing an income to pay off the loans. Hamilton's uncertain health, although a real problem, was secondary in his complaints about making a living and succeeding in the New World.

Writing to his brothers, Robert and Gavin, between the summer of 1739 and late 1742, Hamilton described some of his money problems and how he handled

them. The letters suggest how the trans-Atlantic credit system worked for one not involved in the tobacco trade. They also illustrate how he spent the money and, therefore, something about how wealthy colonials satisfied their material wants. This revealing correspondence is an interesting adjunct to and a confirmation of the more traditional sources for economic history.

A Strategy for Success

A graduate of the University of Edinburgh and a trained physician, Hamilton came to Maryland with little more than his clothing, some writing implements, assorted personal possessions, and a determined ambition to succeed. He had no great personal wealth on which to draw, nor did he bring a retinue of servants or furnishings for home and shop. He did bring his cultivated manners, education, high family status, and letters of introduction to a few contacts in the colony. An older brother, John, lived in Prince George's County and could ease his way with more introductions into local society.

In his climb up the Maryland social ladder, culminating in his 1747 marriage to a daughter of one of the richest and most powerful men in the province, Hamilton was no doubt aided by social skills in addition to his medical ability.[7] He embodied in his manners, demeanor, and Old World family associations a gentility prized by Maryland's upwardly mobile planters. But such advantages were not sufficient in the acquisitive society he found in Maryland, where, he wrote to Robert, "Generally both high and low of them are all upon the bite." Because few of the upper class could point to an established aristocratic lineage, social status in the Chesapeake came to be identified with material wealth rather than family background.[8] Under these conditions, and regardless of his qualifications, Hamilton was compelled to surround himself with the trappings of wealth in order to signal his own high standing. His choice of goods and services are indicative of what, in Maryland, those necessary possessions were. The letters suggest that he did not completely abandon himself to colonial customs in his buying patterns. As was true in his native Scotland, family traditions and Scottish associations continued to affect his choices.[9] Dr. Hamilton combined elements of the old and the new in his quest for recognition and success.

We learn in these letters what was most necessary for an urban and urbane newcomer to provincial Maryland society. Accounting for his expenditures in a letter written on August 20, 1739, Hamilton told Robert about those purchases. Within months of arrival he had rented a house in town, acquired household furniture, and bought two African-American slaves—a woman to take care of his household and a "boy," no doubt to assist in his shop and attend him as butler and valet. A man of his social class certainly required household servants; he was not expected to work with his hands.

When selecting servants, however, he could have elected to buy the labor of

white indentured domestics from the British Isles or slaves of African descent, or hire a white servant at an agreed upon wage. In keeping with local custom, Hamilton decided to purchase African slaves and not white servants. He may well have sensed or been advised that slaves would confer higher social status and were more obvious signs of gentility than white domestics would have provided.[10] Even with the financial problems of that first year, he chose not to avail himself of the short-term but less costly alternatives.

Without explanation, Hamilton reported that he spent £36 for two "Negro" slaves. It was not an exorbitant amount—one healthy adult male slave could cost more than £40—but it was certainly more than the price of two white servants. A servant would have cost no more than one-third that of a slave.[11] Expensive investment of capital in Africans had become a necessary part of the gracious life, a luxury that carried important symbolic value for a man with the high expectations of this Scottish immigrant. If Hamilton intended to remain in Maryland for several years, it would also be a thrifty move because he could anticipate a better return on his long-term investment.

Dr. Hamilton expected that his slaves would serve him knowledgeably and well and be familiar with local customs. By the time he had arrived in Maryland, a good part of the slave population was either Maryland-born or had been transported from the English-speaking Caribbean, where they were introduced to the language, knew something of English habits, and had acquired some immunity to local diseases. Few were native to Africa or unaccustomed to European ways.[12] In fact, in lieu of explaining his purchase of slaves, he boasted of the woman's domestic talents to his brother, justifying her presence by her adeptness at cleaning, brewing beer, and cooking. She could, he wrote in his August 1739 letter, "dress a dish of vittles to admiration." He regretted that his friends in Scotland could not also enjoy her culinary skill.

The boy, most likely the Dromo who would accompany him on his trip north five years later, did not at the time rate any comment.[13] He may have been too young to have acquired many skills, and his ability to assist the doctor in his practice was still to be proven. Or perhaps, after he had initially justified in glowing terms the talents and expertise of one of his new slaves, it was not necessary to extend the hyperbole. The unidentified woman, the marvel of domestic arts, significantly was never again mentioned in either his extant correspondence or other writings.[14] Once he had explained his decision to his creditor, Hamilton felt the subject was closed.

For a physician in Maryland, transportation loomed as an additional necessity. Water travel was the most efficient means of moving goods, but a man traveling alone moved faster by horse. A means of land transportation was of increasing importance in the colonial world, as settlements became more dense and stretched beyond immediate rivers and creeks. Dr. Hamilton discovered he

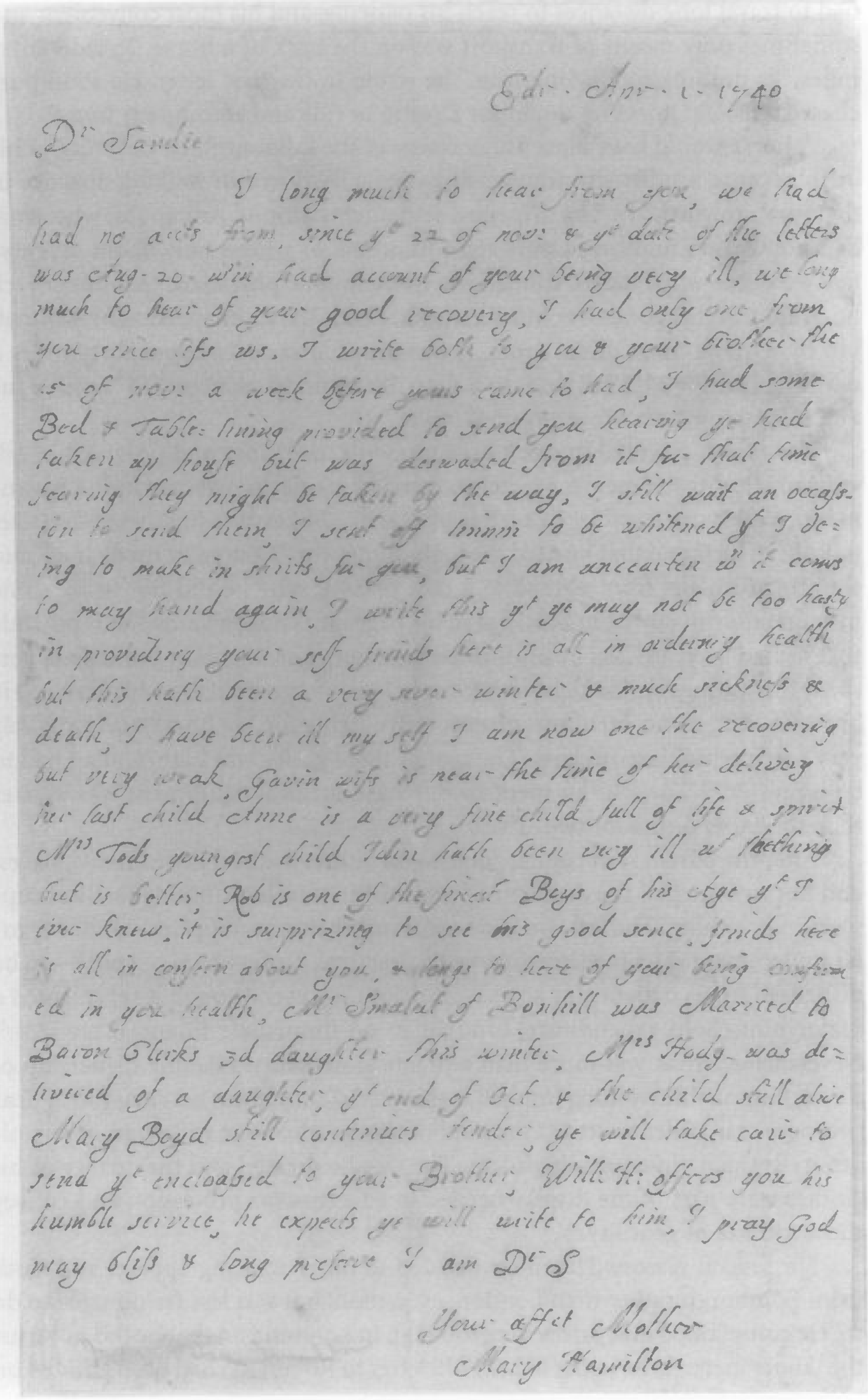
had to travel long distances to reach his patients, and his most convenient and sometimes only means of transport was on the back of a horse. To ride thirty miles, "is nothing to an American," he wrote in the first letter. He soon purchased a second horse no doubt for Dromo to ride and accompany him.[15]

A horse would have been unnecessary in the Edinburgh community of his birth because a sufficient number of patients lived within walking distance in that very crowded city. The dispersed settlements around Annapolis, whose urban population numbered only eight hundred, of whom only about seventy-five were free white males, called for a more mobile physician.[16] On horseback he could travel at about five miles an hour, about the same speed as by sailboat, but by a much more direct route. It was possible to cover about forty miles a day.[17] In the June 12, 1742 letter to Robert, he reported expecting to "broil in the Sun to morrow thro a Journey of 44 miles."

It was also essential to stock his shop with medicines and provide himself with medical instruments. Medicines needed regular replacement; the instruments were more durable. In a letter of March 1740 explaining these purchases to Robert, he noted that he used the loan money for "a Cargo of medicines" and shop instruments from abroad at a cost of £40. Why he did not bring some instruments directly from Scotland in his baggage is not explained. It is possible that he had been advised by his brother to supply only his most immediate personal furnishings and to delay other capital purchases until after his arrival. He brought little or no furniture or decorative items for his home and probably very few medical instruments. The cost of these goods was high, and all had to be imported.[18] The £40 he spent to purchase medical equipment was greater than the expenditure for two slaves.

After the purchase of capital goods—furniture, medical instruments, slaves, and horses—he had the problem of replenishing his less durable medical supplies and clothing. The last two were constantly being used up and needed regular replacement. The medicines served a practical, professional purpose—to be dispensed to his patients for a price. But clothing, even though it represented a major household expenditure, brought in no immediate financial rewards.[19] Nevertheless, dress was more than a practical necessity. Like the ownership of slaves, fashionable clothing implied high social status. It was necessary to appear prosperous in order to attract the kind of clients who were willing to pay a university-trained physician's high fees. The way he dressed and the quality of his clothes were part of the display needed to advertise his profession and convey the attributes of gentility.[20]

For several reasons Hamilton decided to order wearing apparel and cloth from Edinburgh rather than London, even though it was less fashionable to do so. He complained that prices were too high in London and that he did not trust the tailors there. As he wrote in his 1739 letter to Robert, he had been cheated on



Edr. Apr. 1. 1740

Dr Sandie

I long much to hear from you, we had had no accts from, since ye 22 of nov: & ye date of the letters was Aug. 20. wch had account of your being very ill, we long much to hear of your good recovery, I had only one from you since lifs ws. I write both to you & your brother the 15 of nov: a week before yours came to hand, I had some Bed & Table: lining provided to send you hearing ye had taken up house but was deswaded from it for that time fearing they might be taken by the way, I still wait an occasion to send them, I sent off linnin to be whitened yt I design to make in shirts for you, but I am uncearten til it cows to may hand again, I write this yt ye may not be too hasty in providing your self frinds here is all in ordinary health but this hath been a very sever winter & much sicknefs & death, I have been ill my self I am now one the recovering but very weak, Gavin wifs is near the time of her delivery her last child Anne is a very fine child full of life & spirit Mrs Tods youngest child John hath been very ill wt theething but is better; Rob is one of the finest Boys of his Age yt I ever knew, it is surprizing to see his good sence, frinds here is all in consern about you, & longs to here of your being confirmed in you health, Mr Smalet of Bonhill was Married to Baron Clerks 3d daughter this winter. Mrs Hodg was delivered of a daughter, ye end of Oct. & the child still alive Mary Boyd still continues tender, ye will take care to send ye encloased to your Brother; Will: H: offers you his humble service, he expects ye will write to him, I pray God may bliss & long preserve I am Dr S

Your affect Mother
Mary Hamilton

an earlier purchase by a tailor named Leatch, who used poor quality thread and buttons, and in the future intended to have his clothes made in Scotland. But his contempt for London clothiers was based on more than quality and cost. Family associations and regional attitudes shaped his choices and moderated any potential devotion to the latest fashions from London. Those habits kept him tied to Scottish craftsmen. He may well have been following a form of "conspicuous parsimony" so characteristic of the Scots professional.[21] Hamilton assumed that he could order his clothing from Scots tailors, who produced well-made but less fashionable outer clothing, without jeopardizing his social standing in Maryland. His later correspondence makes no mention of tailors so there is no way to determine how long this practice continued. Nevertheless, at some point he did adjust to New World imperatives. During his trip north in 1744, Hamilton mentioned being fitted for a new coat and breeches in New York.[22]

From correspondence with his mother, Mary, we know that she consistently supplied white cloth for his shirts and table linen.[23] Scottish linen had the reputation of being coarse. It was in demand for slave clothing and generally competed with lower quality German osnabrig fabrics for plantation use.[24] Alexander's letter to Robert of March 15, 1740, tells us why, in spite of its poor reputation, he drew on that Scottish product. Although textiles of all qualities were available through Maryland merchants, the price of locally produced cloth in America was very high. An inadequate supply of imported goods kept prices even higher.[25]

Studies of the early textile industry in the Maryland area point to an increase in the production, and therefore availability, of locally produced cloth in the eighteenth century. As tobacco prices fell, the labor of wives, daughters, and slaves was turned to spinning, weaving, knitting, and making thread from locally grown sources. With rising demand for cloth within Maryland during the first half of the eighteenth century, local suppliers produced more and better goods, but they could not compete with the demand for imported luxury items either in price or quality. The finest yarns, as well as the cheapest, continued to be imported.[26]

Although Scottish yarns were not as fine as those from France and Holland, Hamilton found them acceptable. In quality and whiteness they had improved during the century, and he thought they compared favorably with the local products.[27] As a result he continued to order white cloth from Scotland, and his mother was happy to act as his agent, sending him shirts and other linen products. This practice helped him maintain a commercial association with his Scottish roots.

Opposite: Mary Hamilton was prominent among her son's financial agents. (Maryland Historical Society, MS 1265.)

A Matter of Money

Important in Hamilton's choice of these dry goods was the fact that his mother's assistance freed him from the want of money. Many an Annapolis shopkeeper of the 1730s demanded cash, and most were reluctant to extend credit to a newcomer.[28] Hamilton had little hard currency at his disposal in those early years and depended on a system of credit that had been developed by planters who dealt with English agents who marketed their tobacco and extended credit to purchase goods.

The system that financed most of Maryland's establishment was based on a credit instrument, the bill of exchange, which operated somewhat like a checking account today. Unlike a check drawn against cash deposits, the bill of exchange was backed by a line of credit either for "effects in hand," like tobacco, or sums due from others or, in some cases, an established reputation. It was basically a loan and as such included an interest charge. Among tobacco merchants of the Chesapeake it was the most common and convenient method of purchasing goods from abroad, because it did not require an immediate transfer of hard currency, which few people in Maryland possessed.[29] Hamilton, who was not a tobacco planter, had no commodities to put up as collateral. His reputation had not yet been established, and his income from practicing medicine was uncertain.[30] He was dependent on his immediate family and in-laws, specifically their willingness to co-sign his notes—agreeing to pay his debts if he could not—then patiently wait for payment until he had made his fortune. The letters to his brothers Robert and Gavin indicate that he was in debt to an extensive network of relatives in Scotland and England. They provided the long-term start-up funds necessary to establish both the medical practice and the social life that would lead to a prestigious marriage.

Before leaving England, he had arranged for his then brother-in-law, John Horsley, a minister near London, to cover the cost of his initial bills of exchange. But Horsley, a widower, remarried in 1739 and with new family responsibilities reneged on part of his promised £100. Horsley ignored Alexander's requests for additional funds. Instead, we learn from these letters, the Maryland immigrant turned to his unmarried, thirty-three-year-old brother Robert, a minister in Edinburgh, to provide the additional wherewithal to pay for his London bills of exchange.

John Horsley had established credit for Alexander at the merchant firm of John Buchanan in London. Buchanan, a Scotsman operating in England's major economic center, was one of the merchant houses that drew Chesapeake business during those years, handling a large part of Maryland's import and export trade as well as giving credit to the planters.[31] Buchanan, acting as Alexander's agent, paid his bills for goods purchased either in Britain or in the colonies and

then expected repayment after a period of between six and twelve months (the time is not specified in the letters) from Hamilton or whoever had guaranteed the loan—first John Horsley and then Robert Hamilton.[32] Because Dr. Hamilton had no spendable income for a time, he could not by himself pay off those debts.

His loan balance would be subject to an additional 15 percent penalty if overdrawn or if the payer, Hamilton's money source, did not supply the money to cover the bill of exchange within the allotted time. Alexander had good reason to be concerned that Robert cover the Buchanan account when he suspected that Horsley had not completely fulfilled his loan promise of £100. He probably feared not only the additional monetary penalty but also a loss of reputation that could jeopardize future access to credit if Buchanan did not pay the London merchants the full sum for his goods and the bills were returned, as he said to Robert in 1740, "protested." The cost of purchasing the two slaves, furniture, and the horse had exceeded the £50 that Horsley had provided, and the doctor knew that he required at least another £30 immediately.

The bills of exchange drawn against John Buchanan were not his only debts. The doctor also borrowed money directly from several other relatives, some of whom are mentioned in the letters: his brother Gavin and mother, Mary, in Edinburgh; brother John in Maryland; and brother-in-law William Tod, a merchant in Edinburgh. Tod and brother Gavin, both of whom owned shops in Edinburgh, may have supplied goods directly to Alexander subject to payment at some future time. It is possible that they also secured loans on their own bonds so that Alexander could draw on Edinburgh commercial houses for credit.[33] His mother, on the other hand, provided the cloth purchased from her own contacts in Glasgow. Her father, William Robertson, had been a linen merchant in Glasgow and all of her life she acquired her bleached linen from that city, which was a growing textile area.[34] Alexander was very much in her debt.

In an ambiguous transaction mentioned in the June 12, 1742, letter involving a bond from William Coult of Garturk ("Garturk's band"), Alexander implied that he had cleared part of a debt to Gavin of 1,000 Merks (about £60 sterling) but in the process had incurred a new debt to his mother. It is possible that Mrs. Hamilton had lent a sum of money to Coult on bond expecting that he would pay interest on the loan. Part of Coult's loan from her had been paid by him to Gavin on Alexander's account. In clearing a debt to his brother, Alexander felt obliged to compensate his mother for the interest she would no longer receive from Coult.[35]

The exact amount Dr. Hamilton borrowed from each person is not specified in the letters apart from the initial £50 from Horsley, the £30 from Robert, and £60 from Gavin. But the debts were much greater than these sums. For four years Alexander continued to borrow small amounts for his supplies and services or to refinance older debts to avoid having those unpaid bills returned.

Until he had acquired sufficient capital, what he called "Lying money at home" over and above his debts, he borrowed from his family while they continued to pay Buchanan and possibly other merchants for his bills of exchange.

The debts mounted through 1742. Agonizing over his slow repayment, Hamilton explained in another letter to Robert on November 26, 1742:

> My first expense of household furniture, slaves, and horses, which were necessary and requisite for life in this remote wilderness and the yearly demand of Sterling Cash for medicines, the charges of housekeeping, and the slow returns of money, still keeps it out of my power to Refund my friends[36] at home, which has often made me uneasy. But this gives me Some Solace, the hopes of doing it in a little more time and Should death overtake me before I make actuall payment of these debts, what Estate I have already acquired in this country in all probability, will do more than discharge them.[37]

Thus, at the end of 1742, four years after arriving, he was still in debt for his start-up costs. Collecting from his patients was a continuing problem, one he recognized as a result of peculiar credit practices in America—the "mischievous custom"—mentioned in the letter of November 5, 1740, to "give large & Long credit." Nonetheless, he slowly remitted part of the money to his brothers as he built up his capital resources in Maryland. He had enough equity in unpaid bills, personal possessions, and slaves to cover his debts in the event of his death.

The letters also hint at another pressing economic problem in early Maryland. One of the reasons for Hamilton's slow payments to his family was not that he lacked business—he actually had more than he could handle—but the dilemmas posed by a depreciated paper currency and an inadequate money supply. That combination of problems made it difficult to collect his fees and to be sure of the value of the money once collected. This was not a new problem in England's overseas possessions. In the face of a lack of hard currency, most of the American colonies printed their own paper money. That form of currency provided both a medium of exchange and access to small denominations for local trade. Maryland, however, was slow to pass a law providing for paper money. In its absence the circulating money was limited to a variety of coins minted by various European nations, or "unprised" (that is not packed in hogsheads) tobacco valued at about one pence per pound.[38]

After four years of debate on how paper money was to be used and after several versions of the bill had been rejected by one or the other house, the Maryland legislature in 1733 provided for the issuing of £90,000 in new bills in varying denominations between one and twenty shillings. The money was to be valued at the rate set by Parliament for all locally used coins, that is at £133, 6

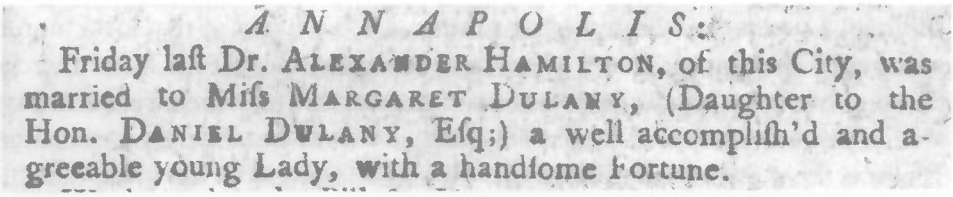
shillings, 3 pence to £100 sterling or sterling at 133 percent of that local money whether coin or paper.[39] The paper was to be legal tender for most commercial transactions but only for some taxes and import duties, which were still payable in pounds of tobacco. The system created a double standard for exchange. Tobacco, the more stable medium of exchange and therefore the more valuable commodity, was still used to pay church taxes, Proprietary obligations, and officers' fees for public services.[40]

The result was a depreciation of the paper currency to below the par set by Parliament. Those tradesmen and urban professionals like Dr. Hamilton, who received their fees in paper currency and had no access to tobacco crops for cash, were in a financial quandary. They had to pay sterling value for their imported goods and sometimes to local merchants in spite of their depreciated income. Hamilton was realistic in his complaints to his family about the value of local currency and his financial plight. Between 1733 and 1739 the paper currency had depreciated from 133 percent to 230 percent. Hamilton thus arrived in Maryland at a time when the local currency had reached its nadir.[41]

The shock of depreciated currency forced the doctor to take what was for him extraordinary action. He raised his prices to an astonishing sum, anticipating that it would be impossible to pay his debts in England during the early 1740s if he charged Scottish rates. Every twenty shillings he earned in local currency he estimated to be worth only eight or nine shillings sterling, an amount only slightly less than John McCusker found was the average for 1739.[42] The depreciated currency, now at 230 percent of sterling rather than the expected 133 percent, certainly reduced the actual value of his local income and explains why he set the prices for his services and drugs so high. They were, he told Robert, "only proportional to the price of other things in this Country."

By the end of 1743 the doctor had apparently satisfied all outstanding family debts and wrote again to Robert that he was grateful to friends and family "for the favours they have done me."[43] It had taken more than four years—from late 1738 to the beginning of 1743—to repay his initial loans in Scotland and England. Only then could he establish his own account with London merchants, consider a real improvement in his standard of living, and fully enter into the responsibilities and pleasures of elite society. It was not until he had repaid those debts that Dr. Hamilton decided to make Maryland his permanent home and to give up the notion of returning to Scotland. This return to Scotland was uppermost in his mind as he told Robert in June 1742. The next year was a turning point. Sufficient capital finally freed him to travel, to participate in local political life, and to marry.

It is no accident that he entered politics for the first time in 1743, thereby taking an important step in securing his place among the acknowledged elite.[44] By 1744 he had enough income and leisure to take an expensive trip to the north-



ANNAPOLIS:

Friday laſt Dr. ALEXANDER HAMILTON, of this City, was married to Miſs MARGARET DULANY, (Daughter to the Hon. DANIEL DULANY, Eſq;) a well accompliſh'd and agreeable young Lady, with a handſome Fortune.

Hamilton's financial security allowed him to marry Margaret Dulany, greatly enhancing his social position. (Maryland Gazette, *June 2, 1747, Maryland State Archives, MSA SC 2311.*)

ern colonies for his health, which resulted in the much quoted travel diary. The following year Hamilton established the Tuesday Club, expanding his social life and leading to his marriage to Margaret Dulany, the "moneyd" wife he had thought unavailable in his 1742 letter to Robert. Without the assistance of his family, who provided what amounted to a four-year loan of start-up venture capital, his financial and social ascent otherwise might have been a more lengthy process, and success might have eluded him completely.

These five letters provide an interesting sidelight on the economic problems faced by a Scottish immigrant in early Maryland. Hamilton had educational advantages and could expect some modicum of comfort in his new home, but he found, as others did, that more than hard work was required to take full advantage of the possibilities in the New World. To succeed he had to draw on a supportive network of family in the Old World. He maintained his trans-Atlantic kinship ties for financial as well as sentimental reasons.

The doctor's early poor health complicated his efforts, but his illness was not unusual for those new to the Chesapeake. All immigrants went through a "seasoning" period that included adjustment to the climate and food as well as overcoming the diseases peculiar to the area. In Maryland the most common health problem was malaria.[45] Hamilton described the violent fevers, intermissions, and sweats that are characteristic of that disease. He was cured by the "Jesuits bark," the popular name for what we know as quinine, which is still a treatment and a preventative for malaria.[46] He was also discomforted by the summer insect life, and by the "scurvy" population, as he patronizingly described the locals. But his complaints were more a reflection of his Scottish disdain for other cultures and a superior attitude toward those lacking formal education than a true evaluation of his Maryland neighbors.[47] He certainly appreciated the generous hospitality of those he encountered in his travels around the province, and he was quick to remark upon it to Robert in the first letter.

These letters, although interspersed with personal comments and observations, are most valuable for the information they contain on the economic problems faced by a new immigrant and the methods one man contrived to handle them. They are of particular interest because they were written by an educated,

urbane professional with no ties to a tobacco plantation but living where, he wrote, "the Staple tobacco answers all & if it can be got home is a Sure bank." In the absence of that "Sure bank," Dr. Hamilton had to draw on a different type of financial resource, his extensive and very helpful family.

The Letters

Annapolis Augt 20, 1739

Dear Brother [Robert]

I write you this to acquaint you, that I have now had my seasoning in the country, and (I thank God) am happily recovered. It was a very Severe Sickness, Such as I never felt in my Life before and has reduced me very Low and weak. I was held for a fortnight, with the most violent fevers that can be Imagined, being deprived utterly of my Senses and Speech during the continuance of them. I sometimes procured a small Intermission, By plentiful natural Sweats, but then during these Intermissions I was so weak that I could not hold up my head, and all the time had upon me cold viscous Sweats as thick almost as boild starch that Stuck in the pores, and weakened me more than anything else. I attribute my recovery to my brothers advice, who removed the distemper by administrating the Jesuits bark.[48]

I writ a Letter Sometime agoe to my Brother Gavin, which I Sent along with one Captn. Donaldson, that Sailed about 6 weeks agoe, and has Surely now come to hand.[49] If Mr. Wardrope,[50] to whose care it was committed has delivered it to the Captn. (tho perhaps he has not, being very besotted and forgetfull) in that Letter I give an account of my Situation here. I keep house in this Town, having two Negroe Servants, a boy and an old woman, that Cost me 36£ Sterl.[51] The old woman is fit for keeping a house, for She can brew, bake, wash, Scour, and dress a dish of vittles to admiration. Many a time I wish to have Some of my Edinburgh friends to take a dinner with me, and a meridian bowl of punch. Business dayly Thrives with me. I and another here (one Stewart an Edinburgh man) have all the people of distinction in town.[52] There are two or three other Doctors that are but hangers on & have the riff raff of the people & the bad pay. I frequently book 40 Shilings a day here, one day with another, never Less than 20. But then tis but paper money, which goes at great disadvantage for Bills of Exchange, giving 100 and 30 Lib. per Cent, at Least, for Sterling, So that if I book twenty Shillings a day I reckon it only the value of 8 or 9 Sterl.[53] Besides everything here is excessively dear, so that if I had either room, or time to give you an account of the prices of things youd be Surprized, which forces me to raise the price of my medicine, 10 Shill. for a Jalep, 18 for an Electuary, 6 for a vomite, 30 for a Box of pills.[54] You'd think me mad with you to Charge So, but these prices are only proportiond to the price of other things in the Country. For this reason, If I live

to have any Lying money at home, I design to commission most of my necessarys from Scotland; Such as wearing apparell, &ct. It has cost me Something to get a little houshold furniture here. As for comissioning my Cloths from London, I have no notion of it, they being Cheaper at Edr. and the London Taylors a parcel of Incorrigible Cheats. Leatch cheated me confoundedly with bad threed, gold buttons which wore out Immediatly, whereas he called them wire buttons, & took 8 Shill. Sterl. a dozen for the Coat & 4 for the jacket & breeches buttons. I hope next year to pay my debt to my Brother here, defray my family Charges & remitt Some money home. My brothers family now are all pritty well.[55] I had a Letter from himself this day. I Live now 30 miles distance from him, which to ride is nothing to an American, but Business prevents my Seeing him So often as I would Incline.

The weather here is now extremely Sultry, & fevers & agues, fluxes & Pleurisy abound, and kill a great many people. This country abounds So with nauseous vermine in the Summer, that Pharaoh would have thought Egypt with all its pleauges [sic] a paradise to it. The people Generally Speaking are a Scurvy kind of people, but to give them their due very hospitable. There is here few or no publick houses or ordinarys, to go into as you travel the high way, but go into any planters house, rich or poor, be you polander, Sweede, Dane, English or Scotch, you'll have the best fare in his house, for they Love and have a curiosity to converse with Strangers, but come once to a bargain with them, & beware, for were you their nearest and dearest ally, they'll cheat you confoundedly if they Can, and Generally both high and Low of them are all upon the bite, and frequently proove [sic] too many for Strangers. I thank you for your kind offer, you made me in a Letter you writ to my Brother, but I believe I Shall have no occasion to make use of it.[56] My hearty respects to all friends[57] at home, particularly to my mother, dear Brother

Yours affectionatly Alexr Hamilton

Annapolis March 15, 1739/40

Dear Brother [Robert]

I Long to have a line from you. If you can find time to writ one. Nothing is a greater Solace to me in this Distant and comical corner of the world than a Correspondence with near Relations, to whom I bore the greatest respect and affection when present with them, which upon the necessity of being always absent from them makes me more Sensible of.

I am glad to hear by my mothers letters that you have recovered Such a good State of health and the good news that I hear as to that particular from friends in generall gives me great pleasure.

My first Settling and taking up house keeping here has cost me Expences in

the country, and a Cargo of medicines to answer my practise & furnish a Shop, with the price of two Negro Slaves has obliged me to make application to my friends at home for Sterling money. My medicines that came In with Cunningham, & the Shop Instruments that came afterwards with Capt'n Wills have amounted to 40 Lib. Sterl. and the two Slaves to 36 pounds. Mr. Buchanan has got but 50 pound from Mr. Horsley, tho Mr. Wardrop, when Captain Cunningham came here in december last told me that he had got 100, which made me too forward in Sending a Bill upon Buchanan for that 36 by Capt. Cunningham, who has Just now Sailed.[58] To prevent that bill's returning protested to me which will cost me 15 per Cent, I have Sent this along with Watson and Shall use the freedom to accept of what you offered me in a letter you writ Lately to my Brother. For that reason I have drawn a bill upon you for 30 pound Sterling payable to John Buchanan at London. I would have applyd again to Mr. Horsely, but he tells me in his Letter that he had great difficulty to raise the 50, So I rather Choose to have recourse to you. I Shall write to other friends by the Shipping in May.[59] In the mean time give my respects to them all. Tell my mother that the linning [linen] She talks of will be very acceptable, for here that commodity is dear. We pay 10 Shill. of our paper money for the Ell of ordinary linning & 20 Shill. a yard for [an] ordinary cambrick.[60]

I have Enjoyd an Excellent State of health for these two months Bygone after a tedious & Severe Seasoning. My Business here still Increases & I have above 100 Sterl. owing me in the country, tho it is difficult to get in.

dear Brother, yours affectionatly,
Alex'r Hamilton

[on the back "To the Reverend Mr. Robert Hamilton
Minister at Edinburgh North Brittain
by Captn. Watson"]

Annaps. Nov. 5, 1740

Dear Brother [Robert]

Nothing Should please me more than a Letter from you. I dont remember that I had the favour of yours Since I came to Maryland. If your time will permitt you, your Lines will be very acceptable.

I have fallen into Excellent business here, and I hope have more money owing me than all my debts at home amount to. The only difficulty is to get it in for it is a mischievous custom in this country to give large & Long credit.[61] To Say the truth there is more Credit in the country than money, ere people could not live, but the *Staple tobacco* answers all & if it can be got home is a Sure bank.

The buying of furniture for my house, a horse, negro Slaves and the value of

50 pound Sterling in medicines & Shop utensels Since I came in here, has hindered me from Lodging any Quantity of Sterling at London, but it Shall be my first care to refund my relations, in what they gave out for me. These Expences obliged me tho much against my Inclination to draw upon you for 30£ Sterling some time agoe, and I suppose you answered the Bill, for mine was answered at London, which I had drawn upon John Buchanan payable to the merchant of whom I bought my negroes.[62]

I am dear Brother, yours affectionatly
Alex'r Hamilton

July 5, 1741

Dear Brother [Gavin]

I had a Letter of yours Lately with your account Inclosed. I find it very Just, according to my own copy, and Shall Satisfy you as Soon as I possibly can.

You'll desire Mr. Tod[63] & Br. Robert to Send in theirs. You may tell Mr. Tod that I Should be obliged to him for a new Copy of his account for goods, that which I had when I went away being much town & damaged. You will find an opportunity to give the Inclosed order to Mr. Cheyne the printer. He gave it me when I went away in order to recover a debt from one Dr. Thomson, Who is Settled in this country about 150 miles distant from me.[64] I have applyd to him Severall times for the money but to no purpose. It is he that published the famous Grubaean opera called *Buckram in Armour.* If he be no better Physitian than a dramatick writer, he has Just as much confused physick in his head, as may adapt him for Maryland practise.

Remember to pay my respects to Mrs. Hamilton and let me hear from you as often as your Leisure from the public Business will permit.

I am dear Brother
Yours affectionatly
Alex'r Hamilton

To: Baylie Gavin Hamilton

June 12, 1742

Dear [Robert]

Brother I writ to you in the Beginning of Aprile Last, and to Severall others, but the Ship in which these letters went fell into the hands of the Spaniards within ten Leagues of this Coast.[65] I had Inclosed in that Letter a Copy of the Same obligation which I have Inclosed in this, and Still keep a double of it by me In case this Likewise Should be Lost. Your demand of Such a thing, as it is Extremely reasonable, So I with pleasure & good will grant your request.

In the former paquet, I writ to Brother Gavin, Sister Tod,[66] (a Consolitary Letter in answer to her melancholly Philosophical one) Brother Gilbert,(a Long

Burlesque Letter,) Mr. John Glen,[67] John Cleghorn,[68] To my mother, To yourself and a good many others, but the Spaniards have Got them, and So Joy go with them. I dont know but they are turnd to Brimfodder by this time. As I am now very much Straitned for time, I Shall make this to you Serve for a Generall epistle to all the Rest. You'll please to tell my mother that I have received Safe in the Ship Baltimore, my Box with the Shirts & Stocks, after haveing given them over for Lost. Tell Brother Gavin that I received his Letter where he acquaints me that he has received 1000 marks[69] of Coult of Garturks Band[70] upon my account as part payment of the debt I owd him and as I Suppose I must pay the Interest to my mother, If he'll let me know when it is due & how much, I Shall do it with pleasure. As for my other friends and acquaintances I Shall write to them with the first Ship, which will Sail very Soon.

Pay my congratulatory Compliments to Brother Gilbert upon the occasion of his marriage. I wish him all happiness in that State of Life, and a good many fine Children. Give my kind Service to his wife, with whom I hope before I dye to be better acquainted, for I resolve to live a batchellor while I remain in this wicked country, there being no moneyd wives to be had here. Such a fortune as he has had with his wife would pass for an Immense one in this place. Our common portions are two or three negroes, a hundred or two acres of Barren Land, two or three milch cows, and a parcel of hogs. It is here Extremely hard to turn rich as it is in any other part of the world for a man that has his own Burden to bear & a family to mantain as I have been furnished with two slaves, a printise, two horses, two dogs, a cat and a parrot, with whom I converse when alone, he being a very talkative animal. In Short in two or three years, If God Grants me Life, I resolve to visit my native Soil again. Laying aside all vain [and?] Idle expectations of heaping up money, which is Improbable I can do as I am here Situated. If I once can Get a little over and above what will discharge my debts at home in ready cash, I will repair to Edinburgh or Some town In Scotland and Exercise the office of a Pharmacopia with my Small Stock, till better business offers. As for the business here, it may be a little profitable, but is Extremely toilsome & Fatigueing. If you knew the heats & colds that I Suffer, you would pity me much. I must broil in the Sun to morrow thro a Journey of 44 miles. Remember my Service to all friends and my duty to my mother. I am dr. Br.

yours affectionatly

Annapolis June 12th 1742 Alex'r Hamilton

eleven at night

NOTES

1. On Hamilton's literary and musical contributions, see Elaine G. Breslaw, "Wit, Whimsy, and Politics: The Uses of Satire by the Tuesday Club of Annapolis, 1744–1756," *William and Mary Quarterly,* 32 (1975): 295–306; Carl Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress: The Itinerarium of Dr. Alexander Hamilton, 1744* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1948); Richard Beale Davis, *Intellectual Life in the Colonial South,1585–1763,* 3 vols. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1978), 3:1260–61, 1383–90; J. A. Leo Lemay, *Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1972), 213–56; Robert Micklus, *Comic Genius of Dr. Alexander Hamilton* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990); John Barry Talley, *Secular Music in Colonial Annapolis: The Tuesday Club, 1745–56* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1988), 45–64.
2. MS 1265, Maryland Historical Society (MdHS). See also Elaine G. Breslaw, "A Dismal Tragedy: Drs. Alexander and John Hamilton Comment on Braddock's Defeat," *MdHM,* 75 (1980): 118–44.
3. These letters, in the Thomas of Banchory Collection, vol. 1 (to Robert) and vol. 4 (to Gavin) are published by permission of New College Library of the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. I am indebted to Brad Goan and Murray Simpson for assistance in securing a microfilm of the letters and to Brad Austin for his help in transcribing them. Pamela Gilcrist and Eileen Dixon of the New College Library permitted access to the originals.
4. On the economic conditions in Scotland, see R. H. Campbell, "The Anglo-Scottish Union of 1707: The Economic Consequences," *Economic History Review,* 16 (1964): 455–77; William Ferguson, *Scotland, 1689 to the Present* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1968), 167–70; Bruce Lenman, *An Economic History of Modern Scotland, 1660–1976* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1977), 61–73; T. C. Smout, *Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union, 1660–1707* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd Ltd., 1963), 256–79. On emigration, see Ian Charles Cargill Graham, *Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707–1783,* repr. ed. (Port Washington, N. Y.: Kennikat Press, 1972), 1–8; R. L. Emerson, "Medical Men, Politicians and the Medical Schools of Glasgow and Edinburgh, 1685–1830," and G. B. Risse, "Cullen as Clinician: Organization and Strategies of an Eighteenth Century Medical Practice," in A. Doig, et al., eds., *William Cullen and the Eighteenth-Century Medical World* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1993), 135 and 186–88.
5. The commentaries on Hamilton's life and work cited in note 1 skirt the issue, assuming that his high social standing in Scotland was a presumption of wealth.
6. See especially Mary Hamilton to Alexander, November 15, 1739, and April 1, 1740; Alexander to David Smith, n.d. [1743]; Alexander to Gavin Hamilton, October 20, 1743, Hamilton Correspondence, MS 1265, MdHS.
7. He married Margaret Dulany, daughter of Daniel Dulany in 1747. Stephen Bordley to Witham Marshe, May 30, 1747, MS 81, MdHS; *Maryland Gazette,* June 1, 1747. On social mobility in Maryland, see David W. Jordan, "Political Stability and the Emergence of a Native Elite in Maryland," in Thad W. Tate and David L. Ammerman, eds., *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century: Essays on Anglo-American Society & Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), 243–73; Aubrey C. Land, *Colonial Maryland: A History* (Millwood, N. Y.: KTO Press, 1981), 158, 198; Gloria L. Main, *Tobacco Colony: Life in Early Maryland, 1650–1720* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 91–92; Edward C. Papenfuse, *In Pursuit of Profit: The Annapolis Merchants in the Era of the American Revolution, 1763–1805* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 142–51; David Skaggs, *Roots of Maryland Democracy, 1753–*

1776 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973), 38–42.

8. Cary Carson, "Consumer Revolution in Colonial America: Why Demand" in Cary Carson, Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert, eds., *Of Consuming Interests: The Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), 675, describes this process as "the need for a new, universally accessible, portable system of status definition." See also Richard Bushman, "American High Style and Vernacular Culture," in Jack P. Greene and J. R. Pole, eds., *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 364–66.

9. Stena Nenadic, "Middle-Rank Consumers and Domestic Culture in Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1720–1840," *Past and Present,* 45 (1994):125–27.

10. There are very few studies of the symbolic meaning of slave domestic labor in the colonial era, but see Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680–1800* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 37–43; 276–77; Trevor Burnard, "Tangled Cousinery? Associational Networks of the Maryland Elite, 1691–1776," *Journal of Southern History,* 61 (1995): 21. On the shift from indentured servants to African slave labor in Maryland, see Main, *Tobacco Colony,* 97–106; Russell Menard, "From Servants to Slaves: The Transformation of the Chesapeake Labor System," *Southern Studies,* 16 (1977): 355–90; Darold D. Wax, "Black Immigrants: The Slave Trade in Colonial Maryland," *MdHM,* 73 (1978): 33–43; Anne Elizabeth Yentsch, *A Chesapeake Family and their Slaves: A Study in Historical Archeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 185–86.

11. Gloria Main estimates that the average value of slaves in 1717 was £25 and servants about half that amount. As the century progressed, slave prices rose to three times that of servants even though white labor was in very short supply. Cost thus was not linked so much to supply as to some more intangible factors. Main, *Tobacco Colony,* 102, 276; Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves,* 41. On the slave trade in Maryland, see Wax, "Black Immigrants," 30–45; Paul G. E. Clemens, *The Atlantic Economy and Colonial Maryland's Eastern Shore* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1980), 58–63, 166.

12. Russell Menard, "Maryland Slave Population, 1658–1730: A Demographic Profile of Blacks in Four Counties," *William and Mary Quarterly,* 32 (1975): 19–54; Main, *Tobacco Colony,* 123–28.

13. Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress,* xv, 24, 40–41, 101, 167.

14. She was probably the slave named Lukey whom he freed in June 1743. Anne Arundel County Court Judgments. I.B. No. 4.

15. Dromo did ride this second horse on their trip north in 1744. Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress,* 31, 40.

16. On the population of the time, see Nancy T. Baker, "Annapolis, Maryland, 1695–1730," *MdHM,* 81 (1986), 203–4.

17. Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves,* 366–68; Carville Earl, *Evolution of a Tidewater Settlement System: All Hallow's Parish, Maryland, 1650–1783* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 143–50. On the availability of horses, see Allen Eustis Begnaud, "Hoofbeats in Colonial Maryland," *MdHM,* 65 (1970): 207–38.

18. On some of the problems in the trans-Atlantic drug trade see Ian Steele, *Atlantic Merchant-Apothecary: Letters of Joseph Cruttenden, 1710–1717* (Buffalo, N.Y.: University of Toronto, 1977), xviii–xix. I am indebted to John McCusker for bringing this source to my attention.

19. Adrienne D. Hood, "Material World of Cloth: Production and Use in Eighteenth-Century Rural Pennsylvania," *William and Mary Quarterly,* 53 (1996): 43–66.

20. Grant McCracken, *Culture and Consumption: New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1988), ch. 4 "Clothing as Language," 57–70. On the symbolic meanings of clothing and fashion, see also Richard L. Bushman, *Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 69–74; Karin Calvert, "Function of Fashion in Eighteen-century America," in Carson, *Of Consuming Interests*, 252–83; Barnard, "Tangled Cousinery," 21.
21. Nenadic, "Middle-Rank Consumers," 125–27.
22. Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress*, 179.
23. This practice continued through at least until 1749; when Hamilton married, his mother sent gifts of table linen. Mary Hamilton to Alexander April 1, 1740; September 8, 1740; October 15, 1749, MS 1265, MdHS.
24. Henry Hamilton, *The Industrial Revolution in Scotland* (1932 repr., New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1966), 76–86; Lenman, *Economic History of Modern Scotland*, 89–91; Carole Shammas, *Pre-Industrial Consumer in England and America* (New York: Oxford University, 1990), 96–98.
25. Edward C. Papenfuse found several letters written in the 1740s and 1750s in which Annapolis residents begged their relatives in England to send dry goods promising that they could be sold at a great profit in the colony. See Papenfuse, *In Pursuit of Profit*, 14–15.
26. Lois Green Carr, "Diversification in the Colonial Chesapeake: Somerset County, Maryland in Comparative Perspective," and Jean Russo, "Self-sufficiency and Local Exchange: Free Craftsmen in the Rural Chesapeake Economy," in Lois Green Carr, Philip Morgan & Jean B. Russo, eds., *Colonial Chesapeake Society* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 353–76, 393–94; Lois Green Carr and Lorena S. Walsh, "Economic Diversification and Labor Organization in the Chesapeake, 1650–1820," in Stephen Innes, ed., *Work and Labor in Early America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 145–46, 167–72, 181; John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *Economy of British America, 1607–1789: Needs and Opportunities for Study* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 278–87.
27. R. H. Campbell, *Scotland Since 1707: The Rise of an Industrial Society*, 2d ed. (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1985), 51–53.
28. Lois Green Carr and Lorena S. Walsh, "Changing Lifestyles," in Carson, et al., eds., *Of Consuming Interests*, 103.
29. On the bill of exchange and its role in the tobacco economy, see John J. McCusker, *Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1670–1775: A Handbook* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1978), 19–21; Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves*, 288–89; Jacob Price, *Capital and Credit in British Overseas Trade: The View from the Chesapeake, 1700–1776* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 93, 97–106.
30. On the uncertainties of a colonial medical practice, see Whitfield J. Bell, "Medical Practice in Colonial America," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 31 (1957): 442–53. Ian Steele concludes that in the drug trade the seller faced a bigger risk in bad debts from medical practitioners than losses at sea. See Steele, *Atlantic Merchant-Apothecary*, xix.
31. Papenfuse, *In Pursuit of Profit*, 38.
32. On the terms of repayment, see Price, *Capital and Credit*, 112–17.
33. Alexander Hamilton to Robert, June 12, 1742, THO 1, New College Library [hereafter NCL]. It was possible in Scotland for any reputable person, on the security of two or more people, to apply for a cash credit, thus securing advances on the bonds of more substantial people in the community. Hamilton, *Industrial Revolution in Scotland*, 258; Lenman, *Economic History of Modern Scotland*, 63–64.

34. Will Hamilton to John Robertson, Merchant in Glasgow, August 13, 1713, THO 4, NCL; Shammas, *Pre-Industrial Consumer,* 96–98.
35. I am indebted to Jacob Price for his assistance in interpretating this transaction and for his help in identifying Coult. A William Coult of Garturk is mentioned in Charles B. Boog Watson, comp., "Notes on the Closes and Wynds of Old Edinburgh," *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club,* 12 (1923): 89, as living on Coul's Close in Edinburgh. He lived there for only a short time and probably had left the city by 1752. He does not appear in J. Gilhooley, comp. *Directory of Edinburgh in 1752* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 1988).
36. Hamilton always referred to his kin as friends. This was not an unusual use of the term for the time. Nancy F. Cott, *Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780–1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 186.
37. This quote is extracted from another, much longer letter not published here. THO 1, NCL.
38. On colonial currencies, see Neil Carothers, *Fractional Money: A History of the Small Coins and Fractional Paper Currency of the United States* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1930), 17–34; McCusker, *Money and Exchange,* 116–31.
39. Kathryn L. Behrens, *Paper Money in Maryland, 1727–1789* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1923), 19–20; Clarence P. Gould, *Money and Transportation in Maryland, 1720–1765* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1915), 78–85; McCusker, *Money and Exchange,* 189–96.
40. Behrens, *Paper Money,* 22–27.
41. See McCusker, *Money and Exchange,* 120, and his tables for Maryland money on 202.
42. If local currency was at 133 percent of sterling, 20 shillings at par should have equaled 15 shillings sterling rather than the 8 or 9 he estimated. With Maryland currency at 230 percent of sterling his estimate is about right. I am grateful to Professor McCusker for an explanation of this discrepancy.
43. Alexander Hamilton to Dear Brother [Robert], Nov. 8, 1743, THO 1, NCL.
44. Lois Green Carr, "Sources of Political Stability and Upheaval in Seventeenth-Century Maryland," *MdHM,* 79 (1984): 50. On the relationship between social status, wealth, and political office, see also David W. Jordan, "Political Stability and the Emergence of a Native Elite in Maryland," in Tate and Ammerman, *Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century,* 243–73.
45. Darrett B. and Anita H. Rutman, "Of Agues and Fevers: Malaria in the Early Chesapeake," *William and Mary Quarterly,* 33 (1976): 31–60.
46. The bark was from the cinchona tree native to Peru; the Jesuit religious order popularized its use, thus "Jesuits bark." Frederick F. Cartwright, *Disease and History: The Influence of Disease in Shaping the Great Events of History* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1972), 142–44; William H. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples* (New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1976), 279–80.
47. Benjamin Franklin commented that "It is the character of the Scotch to be contemptuous." Quoted in Richard B. Sher, "An 'Agreable and Instructive Society': Benjamin Franklin and Scotland," in John Dwyer and Richard B. Sher, eds., *Sociability and Society in Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 1993), 191.
48. His brother John, also a physician, lived in Prince George's County. He had been in Maryland about fifteen years. Elaine G. Breslaw, "A Dismal Tragedy: Drs. Alexander and John Hamilton Comment on Braddock's Defeat," *MdHM,* 75 (1980): 120.
49. Gavin Hamilton was an older brother and a bookseller in Edinburgh. Warren McDougall, "Gavin Hamilton, Bookseller in Edinburgh," *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 1 (1978): 1–19. A Captain Henry Donaldson was a visitor to the Tuesday Club on April 1,

1746. Elaine G. Breslaw, ed., *Records of the Tuesday Club of Annapolis* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 25. It may have been Donaldson's ship, the *Lee*, that brought the doctor to Maryland. Donaldson sailed a regular route between Maryland and London. *London Daily Post*, September 18, 1738.

50. Probably James Wardrop, an Upper Marlboro merchant (d. 1760). See Robert Barnes, *Marriages and Deaths from the Maryland Gazette, 1727–1839* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1973), 191.

51. The woman was probably the slave called Lukey whom he freed in 1743. Anne Arundel County Court Judgments, June 1743, I.D. No. 4. The "boy" is probably Dromo (aka Ben) who accompanied Hamilton on his trip north. Bridenbaugh, ed., *Gentleman's Progress*, xv, 24, 31, 40; *Maryland Gazette*, January 1, 1756.

52. Dr. George Steuart (1695–1784), who had arrived in Annapolis in 1720, was one of the few other Scotsmen in the town. William R. Brock, *Scotus Americanus* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 1982), 178. Their friendship never developed. Steuart did not join Hamilton's club, and in 1753 the two men opposed each other in a bitter, disputed election for an assembly seat. Hamilton was declared the winner after two days of hearings. William Hand Browne, *Archives of Maryland*, 72 vols. (Baltimore, Maryland Historical Society, 1883–1972), 50:168, 175, 179.

53. The standard rate of exchange fixed by Parliament between local money (coin and paper) and sterling was £133, 6 shillings, and 8 pence (133/6/8) for £100 Sterling or 133 per cent. Behrens, *Paper Money*, 14. Depreciation reduced the value of that paper money. At the standard rate he should have expected his 20 shillings to be worth 15 shillings sterling. He was earning only about half the value at the depreciated rate.

54. A jalap was a purgative made from the dried roots of a Mexican plant; an electuary, a medicinal concoction in the form of a paste combining a powder with honey or a syrup; the vomitae could be any number of emetics that caused vomiting such as tartar emetic or vitrio (a sulphate). Jon Eklund, "*The Incomplete Chymist: Being an Essay on the Eighteenth-Century Chemist in his Laboratory . . .*" (Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1975); John C. Gunn, *Gunn's Domestic Medicine* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986, facs. repr. 1830).

55. John Hamilton. See note 48.

56. Gavin told him of Robert's offer. Alexander changed his mind about accepting a loan from Robert when his former brother-in-law, John Horsley, could not fulfill his promise for more money. Horsley had been married to Ann Hamilton, who died in 1736. He then married Mary (Mollie) Leslie toward the end of 1739, a condition that probably restricted his ability to lend money to his distant former relatives. See Mary Hamilton to Alexander Hamilton, November 15, 1739, MS 1265, MdHS; Alexander Hamilton to [Robert] March 15, 1739/40 below.

57. As noted in note 36, in all his letters Alexander refers to his family members as "friends."

58. John Buchanan was a major London merchant in the Maryland tobacco trade. Such merchants often supplied Marylanders with goods and could serve as bankers. On the workings of this credit system and Buchanan's role see Papenfuse, *In Pursuit of Profit*, 39–41.

59. Tobacco vessels left the Chesapeake Bay in convoy escorted by British warships sometime in May or later, the best time to send letters to England and Scotland. On the convoy system see Arthur Pierce Middleton, *Tobacco Coast: A Maritime History of Chesapeake Bay in the Colonial Era* (repr. 1953, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University and Maryland State Archives, 1984), 321–24.

60. The ell was a lineal measurement of varying amounts derived from the length of the

arm (ell referring to elbow). The English ell was 45 inches, the Scottish el 37.2 inches. OED. Cambric was a finer yarn than an ordinary linen. Linen manufacturing in Scotland was becoming a major British industry although Scottish cloth was the less expensive fabric. On the cloth industry in Scotland, see Hamilton, *Industrial Revolution in Scotland,* 76–86; Lenman, *Economic History of Modern Scotland,* 89–91; Shammas, *Pre-Industrial Consumer,* 96–98.

61. Hamilton followed the local practice of giving long-term credit. He occasionally was forced to sue the estates of his deceased patients to collect debts that had accumulated over a period of years. See Anne Arundel County Court Judgments, March 1745, 50–51; March 1747, 684 and 717; August 1750, 587–88; March 1754, 817–19.

62. The name of the slave merchant is not mentioned in any of the letters. The slave trade in Maryland was a minor component of Maryland's colonial economy and involved only a few merchants. Most of the external slave trade in the colony was handled by factors acting as commission agents for English slavers. The most important factor of the time was Thomas Ringgold of Chestertown on the Eastern Shore. See Darold D. Wax, "Black Immigrants"; Land, *Colonial Maryland: A History,* 160. One of the few merchants directly involved in the slave trade, another Eastern Shore man, was Richard Bennett III of Oxford. Paul Clemens, *The Atlantic Economy and Colonial Maryland's Eastern Shore* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980), 123–24. Dr. Hamilton was acquainted with both men. Ringgold attended a Tuesday Club meeting and Bennett handled the Eastern Shore business of another one of Hamilton's London suppliers, William Anderson. Breslaw, *Records of the Tuesday Club,* 336; William Anderson to Alexander Hamilton, April 10, 1751, MS 1265, MdHS.

63. His brother-in-law, William Tod, a merchant in Edinburgh.

64. Dr. Adam Thomson received his medical training in Edinburgh and lived in Prince George's County, Maryland. He became embroiled in a controversy with Dr. John Kearsley of Philadelphia in 1748 over the methods of smallpox inoculation. D. G. Carroll, "Medicine in Maryland, 1829–48," *Maryland State Medical Journal,* 27 (1978): 16; Henry Lee Smith, "D. Adam Thomson, the Originator of the American Method of Inoculation for Small-Pox," *Johns Hopkins Hospital Bulletin,* 20 (1909): 49–52. I have not been able to track down this "opera." Although Thomson did support and participate in the theater, he was better known for his satirical verses. Hugh Rankin, *Theater in Colonial America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960), 78; J. A. Leo Lemay, *Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1972), 236–37. I am grateful to Brad Austin for assisting in compiling this information on Thomson.

65. The military conflict known as the War of Jenkins' Ear began in 1739 and resulted in a series of captures by Spanish privateers near Chesapeake Bay in 1740 and 1741. Howard H. Peckham, *Colonial Wars, 1689–1762* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 89–92.

66. Margaret Hamilton, who had married William Tod, an Edinburgh merchant.

67. John Glen was the minister of Greyfriars Church and of the college church after the death of Alexander's father, Wiliam Hamilton. Hew Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae: The Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation,* 6 vols. (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1915), 1:33, 146.

68. John Cleghorn, born about 1720, was the son of his sister Jean, a widow.

69. About £60 sterling.

70. William Coult of Garturk in Edinburgh was probably in debt to Mrs. Hamilton on bond ("band" in the letter). The complications of this transaction are detailed in my introduction.


BEE BRAND PRODUCTS DEPENDABLE AS THE SUN'S RAYS
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Portfolio

Baltimore's history is in many ways defined by the people and places that have left their mark on the port city over the past two hundred years. With the close of the bicentennial year, we invite you to test your knowledge and identify the people, places and events—some familiar and some not—featured in this portfolio. The photographs are identified on page 463.

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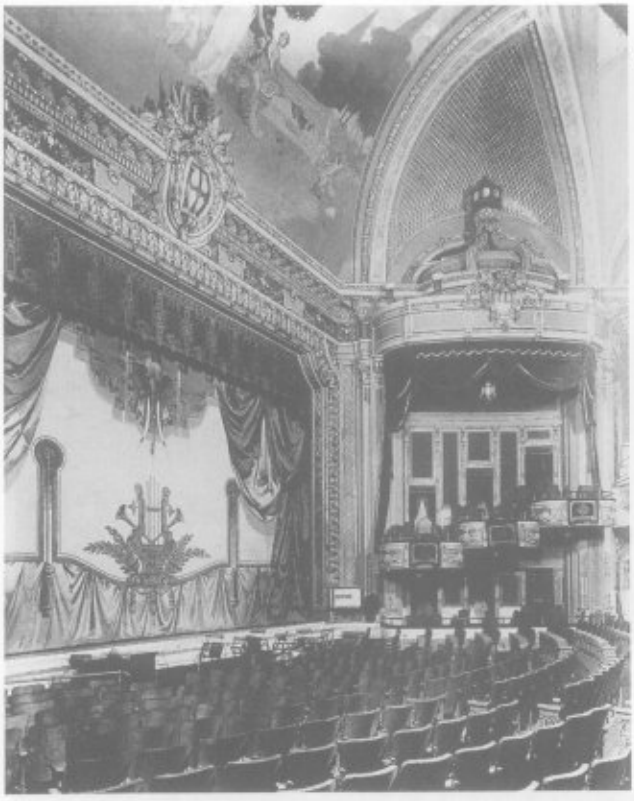

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1) Sundial on the McCormick Building, 1931; 2) Hutzlers Department Store; 3) Cardinal Gibbons Jubilee, 1911; 4) Guilford, Abell family home; 5) Flower Mart, ca. 1913–14; 6) Electric Park, ca. 1916; 7) Hippodrome Theater, 1921; 8) Orioles victory celebration, 1966; 9)Johnny Unitas; 10) May Company Tea Room, 1953; 11) James Rouse; 12) Henry Barnes, Traffic Director; 13) Maron's candy store; 14) Colts championship celebration, n.d.; 15) Carroll Park, 1909.

When William Paca, a man of questionable reputation when it came to women, cast his eye upon young Mary Tilghman, her father and brother reacted with alarm. (Maryland Historical Society.)

Polly Tilghman's Plight: A True Tale of Romance and Reputation in the 18th Century

Edited by ANNE F. MORRIS and JEAN B. RUSSO

On Valentine's Day, 1782, Edward Tilghman Sr., a gentleman living on the Wye River on the eastern shore of Maryland, was concerned about his nineteen-year-old daughter Mary (often called Polly). He had heard rumors of her increasing involvement with a neighbor and social acquaintance, a man considerably older, of wealth and political power but of dubious reputation—William Paca of Wye Island and Annapolis.

Edward Tilghman, aging and in declining health, was anxious to protect his daughter's good name and to see her in safe hands before he died. He had heard mixed reports of Paca's character. To acquire more information about the man, Tilghman sent off a series of confidential letters to his son, Edward Jr. (called Neddy), his brothers, and a cousin. Like Paca, Edward Jr. was a lawyer, and his wife was a distant cousin of Paca's first wife, now dead.

At one point (Letter #3), the elder Tilghman seemed reconciled to the progress of the affair. By Letter #4 he had changed his mind again. Although he seldom left the house, he eventually asked for a secret meeting with Paca "quite free from the prying and Interruption of Impertinents or others." The meeting took place on "the Cart road" at "the cleared ground" in a snowstorm. Tilghman was a thorough man and kept notes on this and other conversations on the backs of letters.

Throughout the month in which Tilghman conducted his inquiries, he maintained a casual, neighborly relationship with Paca, who lived across the river on Wye Island. As they had in the preceding year, the Tilghmans invited Paca to their house on Shrove Tuesday, then again to dinner the next day. Tilghman's daughter, Anna Maria (married to Bennett Chew, brother of Paca's first wife, Mary Chew), helped Paca plan and manage a two-day party (called a rout) at his home, which the Tilghmans and the rest of the neighborhood attended. During this period, at the request of his nephew, Tilghman also shared with Paca parts of two letters and a speech by King George III he had received.

In 1782, at the time Edward Tilghman Sr. wrote his letters, William Paca was

Anne F. Morris edits The Journal of Historic Annapolis Foundation, *and Jean B. Russo is Director of Research for Historic Annapolis Foundation.*

forty-one years old, a gentleman of means and widespread reputation. An Annapolis lawyer and politician, he had acquired considerable wealth through his marriage in 1763 to Mary Chew. Mary died in 1774, leaving one son. Paca married Ann Harrison in 1777, but she died in 1780, followed the next year by her son. In the period between his two marriages, Paca courted Nancy, the daughter of Tilghman's brother, Matthew, but broke off the engagement without apparent explanation. He also had two illegitimate daughters, each with a different mother, and for each of whom he provided well.

Paca was a political radical in his outspoken opposition to British tyranny. He debated in favor of independence, voted for separation, and later signed the Declaration of Independence. He helped write Maryland's first state constitution, sat in the first state senate, and, later in the year in which Tilghman's letters were written, was elected to the first of his three terms as governor. The letters refer to his presence in Philadelphia, where he sat as one of three judges on the Admiralty Court hearing cases of maritime law.

Although Edward Sr.'s sentiments favored the colonies' separation from Britain, his son was either neutral or loyal to the mother country in this divisive period of revolution. Edward Jr.'s political stance in itself might have given rise to his animosity toward Paca, which is clearly evident in his replies to his father's letters. However, a few years earlier Edward Jr. had had a personal confrontation with Paca that contributed to his poor opinion of his half-sister's suitor. Edward Jr. also reported the low regard in which Paca was held by his [Edward Jr.'s] friends. By Letter #9, Edward Jr.'s antipathy for Paca, and his opposition to the match, had hardened into outright disagreement with his father. Curiously, Paca's political position and power were never directly mentioned by anyone in the series of letters and appear to have been of no particular concern or interest to any of the correspondents.

As the month of letter-writing wore on, Tilghman was apprehensive that his son's attitudes towards Paca might cause future problems and perhaps even lead to a duel. Eventually Tilghman entreated Edward Jr., on behalf of his sister, to speak cautiously and in general to listen to the facts before forming an opinion (as he himself was endeavoring to do). He wrote to Edward Jr., "To be heard before condemnation is a right the meanest ought to enjoy," never mind a distinguished neighbor and potential family member.

In his search for information, Edward Tilghman Sr. resorted to the only means at hand—writing letters. His correspondents were in Dover (now part of Delaware, but at that time formally part of Pennsylvania), Chester Town, and elsewhere in Queen Anne's County. They reported on observations in Wye, Annapolis, and Philadelphia. Once completed, the letters themselves became their own envelopes. Each was folded to expose a blank portion of the paper, upon which the address was written. Tilghman's letters were carried, as opportunities

arose, by servants, friends, or acquaintances traveling by foot, coach, boat, or on horseback. Responses might be a month in coming, but this correspondence was conducted with punctilious courtesy. At one point in his inquiries, Tilghman sent a letter to his brother James that was delivered by Paca himself, who then brought back the response, which was far from complimentary to the bearer.

The Women

Well-born women of Tilghman's time bore extraordinary administrative and social responsibilities in their day-to-day management of family, servants, slaves, and a constant procession of guests. Nevertheless, the correspondents in this series of letters, like most men of their day, expressed uncomplimentary opinions of women. Edward Sr. wrote that women are "unfit repositories for important secrets." His son closed a letter with "If you leave this letter on your table, every woman in the house will read it in half an hour after you have it."

Throughout the lengthy correspondence we learn almost nothing of Polly except that she was young, was generally held in high esteem, and "would grace any assembly on the Cont[inent]." Her sister Sukey seems to have been temporarily housebound, a "prisoner for want of" a pair of stays, without which no well-bred woman could appear in public.

Tilghman's letters and the replies he received are in the possession of the Maryland Historical Society (Tilghman Papers, MS 2821). To the extent possible in keeping with modern comprehension, we retain here the spelling and format of the letters as Tilghman and his correspondents originally wrote them. Some tangential material has been omitted.

#1: Edward Tilghman Sr. to Edward Tilghman Jr.

Wye 14th Febry 1782

My dear Son

I am now under necessity of entering upon a painful task — the more painful as I cannot now see my way to the end of it & phaps nver may I have but just learn'd that a report has been some time circulating (even thro Philadelphia) of a match shortly to be concluded between Mr. Paca & your sister Polly: who I have also lately learnd has obtained the general char. of being a very fine woman — Mr. Moultrie says she woud grace any assembly on the Cont[inen]t. . . .

My duty & affection combine to carry me every length to obtain lights relative to the above report which may enable me to conduct myself with propriety & advise my daughter . . . for her best advantage. Not a pson upon earth is to be acquainted with the contents of this letter.

Upon scouting I have reason to be of opinion neither is indifft. to the other; tho there has not, that I can find, any thing *conclusive* passd from either. Nothing

has transpired from him to me or vice versa. There may not *possibly* be any fixt intention in him — reports of the same kind have prevaild as to several ladies — his manner among ladies is very gallant — phaps too much so; but with her it has been particular & seemingly interested — in language I mean.

The gent [Paca] came a few days agoe from Phila. — I resolv'd not to deviate a tittle from my former behavior — ordered everyone to observe strictly the same conduct — Invited him to the festivity of Shrove Tuesday as he was last year here on the like occasion & to dine the next day; which indeed was rather a matter of course[.]

[H]e has concluded in concert with N C* upon a grand rout on Wednesday night next & next day & night to which we are all to go; the company very numerous — *we* are all to behave as if the whole affair was viewed by *us* in the light of that common share which the world will take in other people's concerns & the diversion which they will make out of each other —

. . . I must desire I may have from you a very explicit detail of your knowledge of Mr. P's character & circumstances & what you have heard, & from whom, any way relative to them —

#2: Edward Tilghman Jr. to Edward Tilghman Sr.

Dover Feb. 17th 1782

My dear Father

— The report has been of some standing —

I have as often as I have heard the matter mentioned, expressed my sentiments of him in the strongest terms as to his virtues and vices and without failing to say what would be my conduct — that I should ever retain the tenderest affection for her [Polly] and upon all occasions treat her as a sister for whom I had the sincerest regard & esteem, but that my opinion of him was very publickly known and that the connection would not induce me to treat him as a brother.

— He is I think an exceeding good tempered man and made a most unexceptional husband to both his wives

— upon reflection I think you will see the impropriety of stating particular facts or quoting persons — I can only give the character wh[ich] I think from my own observation and the opinion of many gent. who have had opportunities to know & on whose judgment integrity and veracity I intirely rely, he deserves, and that is, that he in a very considerable degree wants integrity and veracity — I am perfectly satisfied as to these two particulars — I have heard some gent. of whose penetration I have a good opinion, say they knew him to be a man of deep malice and resentment — of this I am not a competent judge

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*Probably Tilghman's daughter Anna Maria, referred to as "A. C." or "N C."

— This I say independent of the shocking disparity of age and the situation she must in a few years expect to be in — As to that of the age, there is a natural unfitness in it, and it would, if every other particular was desirable in the highest degree, have the greatest weight with me

— His first wife [Mary Paca] if alive, might if I remember her age be Polly's grandmother . . .

— What you say with respect to his manner among women is true, but you give it too soft a name in "gallant" the truth is he addresses every woman as if he intended to make love to her wh[ich] I think highly innimical

— This is a matter I have been apprehensive of ever since I left Wye as I knew how well he stood with my sister and her opinion that having been a good husband [to his wives] was such a recommendation as would cover everything — she and I haveing disputed that point more than once — and that he would leave no stone unturned to get her in his favor

#3: Edward Tilghman Sr. to Edward Tilghman Jr. (Reply is #9.)

Wye 24th Feby 1782

My dearest Son

Had you expressed your sentiments of the gent to me and made me acquainted with reports it might have been better than doing it to others — You know how unconnected I am with the world; as I am thro infirmity obligd to be chiefly out of company in the day, & generally leave them intirely, early in the night: and no body says any thing to me of what's passing — I mean in a general way —

In this case, just before his setting off for Phila. I had some hints given me by A. C. which occasioned me to be on the watch; but I coud not discover any thing which induced me to believe that there had [been] more than mere gaiety *in company*

You do not speak of facts within your own knowledge — I wish the gents from whose reports or whose judgments you ground your opinion may not be biased more than common by difference in political sentiments & prejudices directed by violent passions — some little allowance is to be made to all men I ever had to do with, when they speak of others with whom they have any kind of difference — especially important political contests & much to those of warm passions & violent resentments —

Perhaps I may appear confusd am forc't to write in snatches — Continually full of comp[an]y H. Pearces two sons & daughter — old gent gone up — Anny, P. Pearce & my Polly gone off this 26th for Talbot Assembly (on Thursday) under the safe conduct of two young lawyers who I am afraid will be young always — . . .

Edward Tilghman Sr. (Maryland Historical Society.)

— The gent [Paca] gave an entertainment last Wednesday evening, Thursday & the evening of that day, under the management, as you may suppose, of A.C. — it had I understand been long promisd & talk't of — was by much the cleverest I ever saw — 14 ladies dancers & many more gent — ladies all lodgd on the Isld. my house full of guests 2 nights — We are just now B.C., A.C., myself & Sukey — I scarce remember the day when we were not obligd to have two tables —

From the time I last wrote you my mind has been totally engrossed & much agitated by the affair — No inquiries tht coud possibly be made have been wanting — I have not been able to find that a word or action has escaped him her or me or any of my family . . . which coud afford any ground for a report of a match even in agitation much less concluded on — Is there any such thing in the world as a secret —

From all circumsts. & informations hitherto collected I am of opinion that there has not been an application [i.e. a proposal of marriage] — I am satisfyd there has not & I must say at the same time I believe nothing unless the differences with you will prevent one — I am well satisfyd she has much of his esteem, phaps affection; & I question if he is *quite* indifft. to her (conjecture) tho I am convinced she is intirely free —

The difference of ages, I shoud object to with a bad grace — He is sayd to be 39 & I think must be thereabouts [Paca was actually forty-one] she is 20 next fall — My *real opinion* is he wou'd outlast her — he is uncommonly robust & healthy — She [is] constitutionally delicate & tender & being from parents, both rather declining, cannot last long — You'l say phaps this looks like partiality in his favor — I hope you'l find 'tis not — Tis the love of speaking what appears to me truth —

I hope I never shall *fully determine* upon the char. of any man upon the say so or judgment of any other man, where proper evidence may be had — I shall always say, on what *Fact* do you ground your opinion, & exercise my right of judging on the facts when adducd — If a pson is backward in advancing the evidence of facts, I must at least be in doubt whether he can adduce them — To be heard before condemnation is a right the meanest ought to enjoy — If a pson cannot come at the names of those who condemn a char. he has occasion to look into & the facts on which their condemnation is founded; being informed of their condemnation serves no purpose but to raise suspicion, doubts & anxieties — I must be acquainted with men's complexions, connexions, views, & particularly (at this time) with their political principles, & general conduct in the grand & unhappy contest we are engaged in before I can decisively determine

Upon the whole as the affair now appears to me I have thot it best not to interfere in the usual intercourse of the families; still to be on the watch & to pursue my inquiries continually giving my dear child my best advice how to conduct herself as incidents may turn up — the gent I am told is resolvd upon the same conduct as to intercourse

#4: Edward Tilghman Sr. to William Hemsley

Wye 24 Febry 1782 3 P.M.

Dr Sr

For but very lately I have been inform'd that a report has for some time been almost universally circulating of a match concluded on between Mr. Paca & my daughter Polly — My parently duty obliges me to make inquiry into the foundation of it.

I shoud have told you that some in the neighbourhood of Talbot Court House have sayd that I had sent 50 guineas to Phila. to purchase the wedding cloaths

— Blind, deaf, & out of the world I find my self more & more ignorant of what is passing in it — I cannot forbear entreating you as a friend & near consanguine relation to acquaint me whether you have heard of an expression as coming from the Gent or my daughter or me or anything in the conduct or behaviour of him or either of us which may have afforded grounds for such a report and I earnestly request the favor of being explicitly informd what were the remarks cousin Hemsley & you were making on them as they went down the last country dance at [Paca's] entertainment:

and I persuade myself if you know of any thing in the gents. char. or circumstances which might be disadvantageous to my daughter or disagreeable to her friends under such a connexion you'l mention it with the freedom of a friend & with candor I am sure it will be

Shoud you be from home when my boy gets to your house I must ask the

favor of your answer by a messenger of your's by 10 oclock tomm. morn at furthest for a very particular reason

— the contents of this [letter] let me be assured will rest with you & Mrs. Hemsley solely—

#5: William Hemsley to Edward Tilghman Sr.

24th Feby. 1782

Hon[ore]d Sir

For some months past I have heard cousin Polly bantered abt. Mr Paca, and was asked when at Phila if it was not to be a match. My reply was, that I knew nothing of the matter, nor did I believe there was any thing in it.

I never heard of any expressions as comeing from Mr Paca, Miss Polly or yourself, or any thing in the conduct or behaviour of him or of either of you which cou'd have afforded grounds for such a report—

I do not know any thing of Mr. Paca's character or circumstances which wou'd be disadvantageous to your daughter or disagreable to her friends, except that I have heard he was engaged to Uncle Matts Nancy when he was first a widower and broke off the match without giving any reason—

Mr. Paca's dancing with Polly wou'd have passed unobserved by me had not Mrs. Chew remarked to Mrs. Hemsley & myself that Mr Paca had turned the wheel, or shifted his partner until he got to dance with Polly. Upon which Sally [William Hemsley's wife] said, she had observed, that when ever Mr. Paca spoke or danced to cousin Polly her eyes fell, which induced [Sally] to think there was something in the report, or that Polly's being so much bantered had embarrassed her—

This was all I heard on the subject and all Mrs. Hemsley said, and that was to Mrs. Goldsborough & Mrs Chew [Polly's half-sisters]—

#6: Edward Tilghman Sr. to William Hemsley

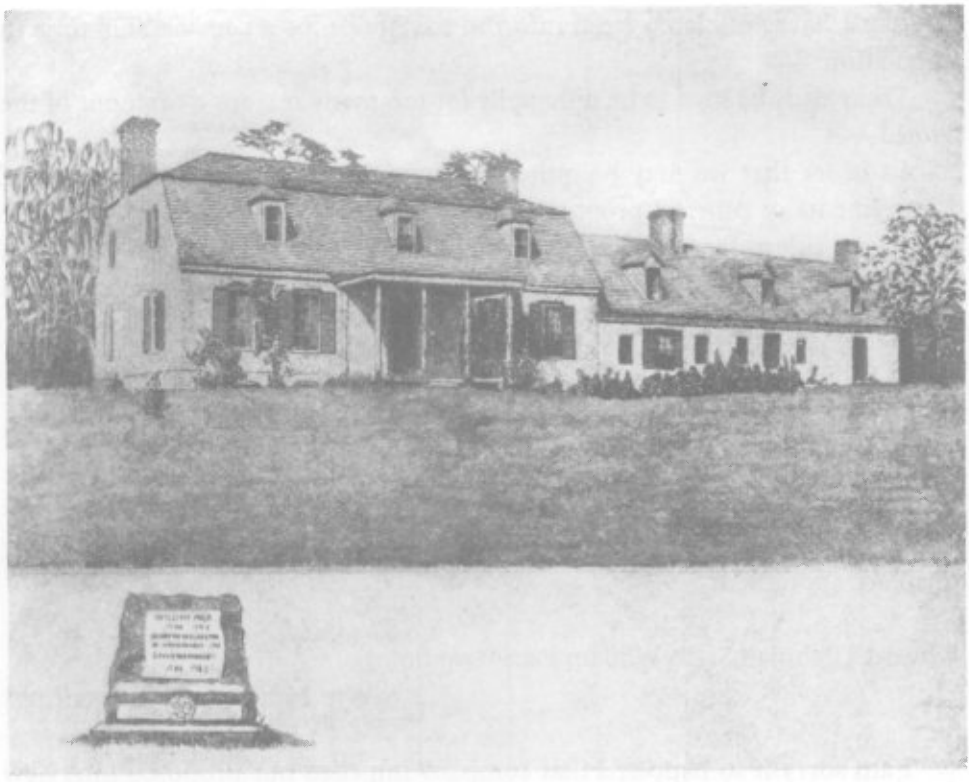
Wye 25. Feby 1782 6 P.M.

Dear Sir

Had I not thought my char[aracter]. gave me some pretensions to confidence I coud not have dared to have made the request I did to a gentleman of your nice sensibility —

— I repeat my injunction of secrecy even from the wife of your bosom: tho' it woud be injustice not to declare at the same time my very high opinion of her goodness & my great esteem for her — I profess myself an ardent lover of the sex No man breathing sympathizes more in their weaknesses than I do: but from constitution, education & habit they are in my opinion unfit repositories for important secrets . . .

The remarks I meant were made as we three were sitting together — I observed



Built by Edward Tilghman, Old Wye in Queen Anne's County eventually passed to the Paca family through a nineteenth-century marriage. (Courtesy, Don Swann.)

both your eyes constantly following them & you two as constantly conversing —

Ten days after the beginning of Edward Tilghman Sr.'s search for information, he requested a clandestine meeting with his daughter's suitor. In response to questioning, Paca claimed to remember nothing of an amorous conversation with Polly on the way home from a ball, "resolving still to endeavor to find how her affections inclind." Paca thought that Tilghman's inquiries about Paca's "circumstances" (financial affairs) were premature. At best, the meeting was inconclusive, and the worried father felt compelled to resume his letter writing.

Edward Tilghman Sr. to William Paca

Wye 24th Feby 1782

Sir

Parental duty obliges me to desire a friendly interview with you on a Subject you cannot be at a Loss to conjecture

I should have made a request of this sort long agoe had I known of the

Reports I have very lately been informd have been for a considerable time in circulation

I may truly be sayd to be unhappily for too many reasons a Man out of the World —

In order that we may be quite free from the prying & Interruption of Impertinents or others I propose yt. you come over into my Neck with your Horse and ride as far as the gate that you may not be observd by your Ferrymen then take the Cart Road down the Neck and continue along the cleared ground until you are met by me at 12 oClock

William Paca to Edward Tilghman Sr.

[24 February 1782]

Sir

Having company with me which I could not have leave without some apology I propose if convenient to you to meet you to morrow about 12 oclock at the place appointed.

Edward Tilghman Sr. to William Paca (two notes)

Wye 24th Feby 1782 Even[ing]

Sir

I am sorry it so happen'd that company impeded our proposed interview today — I shall be punctual to you[r] appointment of tomorrow about 12 oclock — thro the mean time shall support my tottering old age under the agitations of mind natural to a fond parent ever anxious for the felicity of a deserving child as well as I can

Wye 25. Feby 1782 — 7 A.M.

Sir

I am to ask pardon for not sending the inclosed yesterday — It was wrote immediately upon my coming home from the place appointed and intended to be sent in the evening after your company was gone but tho' my mind was intirely engrossed by the subject and my boy was ordered to put me in mind it was forgot

#7: Notes made by Edward Tilghman on the back of the above letter:

At an interview in consequence of the within

— Upon my desiring an explanation of his intentions in the particularities shown to my daughter Polly he confessd he was looking out for an agreeable matrimonial connexion

Polly had been some time foremost in his esteem and his affection inclined him to discover how her affections might be towards him

that he did among other things ask her as he rode home from the rejoicing ball with her in his phaeton (speaking of the favorites of several) if he was a favorite of her's and also if she knew whether he was a favorite of mine;

& that question he says he has asked of sevl. of her sisters also

I told him he asked her the night he came from Mr. Coursey's rejoicing if she could love him — that she evaded — that he then insisted she shoud consider if she coud which she promisd him she wo[ul]d do —

he declared he remembered nothing of it; but could not doubt the truth of what she sayd [added in above the line: NB he was a good deal enlivened by liquor] as his inclinations were much in her favor

— he kept the matter in contemplation resolving still to endeavour to find how her affections inclind

— for some reasons relative to the arrangement of his own concerns did not pursue it very vigorously — did not make any move in it before his going to Phila. — was told there by a Lady she heard Nancy Chew say Neddy had wrote Anny that if Polly made a match with [Paca] or encouraged his addresses or some such words he would never see her or never speak to her or both (I am not sure of the expression) any more —

On February 25, Edward Tilghman Sr. wrote to his brother James, and to his nephew, James Earle, followed on March 5 by a letter to his son Richard and an urgent request to his brother Matthew, whose daughter had been involved with Paca some years earlier. The collection includes no record of responses from Matthew.

Although Edward Jr. was emphatic—"I did not expect or wish ever to hear another syllable with respect to the matter you mention"—his father had the last word, warning his son to be more considered and moderate in his views lest Paca seek recompense or become a member of the family.

#8: James Tilghman to Edward Tilghman Sr. [February 28 1782]

[To] Edward Tilghman Esqr, Queen Annes County [per] the Honble Mr Paca
Dear Brother

Yr letter by Mr P[aca] puts me upon a delicate kind of service which I shall execute as well as I can

I heard a good while ago a report of a love affair; not of a match concluded, and it then went off.

I believe P. is apt to have female attachments I have in the loose flying way heard of one or two lately at Philadelphia

As to the man himself and his affairs you certainly know more of him and them than I can.

My brother M. [Matthew Tilghman, who is, of course, also Edward Sr.'s brother] has told me his behaviour to his daughter was infamously dishonorable and I know he [Matthew] has the worst opinion of him [Paca]. From M. you may know more particularly.

[Paca] is generally thought to be good tempered and to have made a good husband

I have heard (I know nothing) that he sold a considerable part of his estate and put the money in the State or Continental Funds.

Thus I have exhausted my whole Stock of information and have only to say

I am yr very af[fectiona]te Brother

Feb 28th 1782

#9: Edward Tilghman Jr. to Edward Tilghman Sr.

Dover March 1st 1782

My dear Father

— I did not expect or wish ever to hear another syllable with respect to the matter you mention — I gave you my opinion candidly and with a moderation of expression for wh[ich] I blame myself, as I find it has not fully conveyed the detestation I have for the man and the horror with which I consider the connection;

— If I recollect the purport of my sentiments they were that he was a liar and a scoundrel — this is what I have many times said pretty publickly these several years and what I make no doubt I shall continue to think and what I have since the difference between us wishd him to know

— I gave you my opinion & that of my friends whom you know to be men of integrity — for I have made it a rule in my connections to value that quality beyond all others — indeed that rule was one of the first things that gave me a bad impression of this man — his being on a footing of close friendship with a man I always understood to be of infamous conduct [probably Samuel Chase]

— I wish in this matter that my sorrows may not be increased by having the subject again placed before me

— I fear it [the marriage] will take place — in my opinion to the stain & dishonor of the family wh[ich] for my part I dread worse than death

— My opinion and resolution is known. the rest of the family will determine giving it the weight or levity they think it deserves —

. . . while [Paca] was in Phila it appeared to the whole town that he was courting one of two ladies there, tho it was very doubtful which of the two

— If the difference with us will prevent his application, the matter is settled at once — after what I have all along said — and lately wrote and now write, it cant be supposed that difference should not continue

Edward Tilghman Jr. (Private collection.)

— The difference of ages I continue to think an insuperable objection nor can I suppose him of the firmness you mention when I reflect upon the notorious gluttony of his former years

— I will not say that I think you partial, but I always tho't you entertained an improper opinion of his character and you may remember that in the year 1774 when you mentioned it as not impossible that he might have an eye towards Anny before she married C.G. [Charles Goldsborough, her first husband] that I had rather see her dead at my feet

— I am sorry you impute the opinions of my friends to differences in political matters & prejudices directed by violent passions —I dont think their conduct should be thus accounted for towards an object I have always entertained so contemptible an opinion of —

— I have strongly expressed my desire that no more might be said to me and I trust you will in future impute my silence upon the subject to its true source

[P.S.] If you leave this letter on your table every woman in the house will read it in half an hour after you have it

#10: Richard Tilghman to his brother, Edward Tilghman Sr.

10th March 1782

Dr Sir

Mr. Paca and myself were on exceeding good terms when I wrote for the assembly and for a considerable time after

— I cant possibly take upon myself to say any thing as to Mr. Pacas Veracity or Integrity from my acquaintance with him in our Youth

where Gentm. characters are calld in Question I shall ever be cautious, and never say what may operate against them unless what may come within my own certain knowledge

#11: Edward Tilghman Sr. to Edward Tilghman Jr.

Wye 10th. March 1782

My dearest Son

. . . but what shall we say if we find this gent with the *fond approbation* (as it seemed) of gentlemen of the first class for fortune & char. successfully addressing a young lady [Mary Chew, Paca's first wife] a daughter of one of them of conspic[uou]s merit & virtue & with a large independant fortune? Coud he then be of this infamous char.? Surely *they* who trod the same stage with him from his first appearance as a law studt. must have known something of it — When did his infamy commence? What is it? Where am I to go to search for it?

Your sentiments of the gent are that he is a liar & a scoundrel & you wish him to know them — He shall never hear them from me till I am *sure* you can support a charge so big with infamy — pray dear Neddy reflect how this matter *may* end — the gent has not been noted for a coward, rather I fancy the contrary — Shoud these your sentiments happen to be made known to him, will he not call upon you to make the charge good? will it be sufficient for you, in the eye of the world, to say your sentiments are grounded on the information & judgment of men of character? — I am afraid not — Suppose he shoud call upon you to give names & facts — will you refuse? — the world will brand you — He then may phaps call upon you in another manner, which I shudder to think of — you only can tell how you woud stand upon an appeal to heaven —

There is not a man upon the face of the earth, on whose veracity & integrity I woud go so far, without hearing the accused in his defense — pray don't let your resentment hurry you beyond the bounds of reason & justice — Tis due to the meanest culprit that he be heard in his defense —

I wish you had nam'd the two ladies in Phila. the gent is sayd to have addressd in so amorous a manner — I am persuaded he has esteem sufft. here; yet so great the obstacles I doubt if he will declare it to her

My dear son, from various & numerous symptoms I am of opinion my time is short — I will speak with the plainness of a man going off the stage, nor more to appear — The family you are connected with [the Philadelphia Chews] are remarkable *here* for speaking of characters in a manner we have not been usd to. I never I believe opend my lips about it; but more than one of my family have to me; & I must now say, it always surprizd & shockd *me* — I accounted for it as

being the custom of Phila., & not proceeding from the least ill intention — I ought to have sayd, I thought you were not quite free from it. —

I am tied to the Genl. Court in Apl. — no overseer — My ability to move very uncertain — no carriage — cant hear a word from A. Willcocks . . . nor his lady tho I had money put into her hands in Dec. for a pr. stays for Sukey, prisoner for want of them — my wish is earnest to visit you & carry Polly & Sukey [with me]; but as I never was, I believe I never shall be, at any place upon earth, where I shall not say & do what ever upon due consideration my conscience tells me is right.

— a hard fever & constant chilliness since Saturday or Sunday night — A pain in my right side wch came on Monday night increased last & I am to be bled as soon as [possible] I shoud be glad to see you if you choose — The Dr. says no dangerous symptoms but I never in my life thot myself in such danger

The End

What became of Paca's courtship of Polly Tilghman? Although Paca and the Tilghmans remained neighbors across the Wye River, no wedding between William and Polly ever took place. Polly apparently went the way of her cousin Nancy in falling out of Paca's affections. She soon married her cousin, Richard Tilghman. Paca, who died in 1799, never remarried.

And as for Polly's father, in spite of writing to his son Edward the "opinion my time is short," he lived on for another three years.

Joseph E. "Tunnel Joe" Holmes, photographed after his capture by Baltimore police. (Baltimore Sun, *March 4, 1951. Photograph courtesy Maryland Division of Correction.)*

The Great Escape of "Tunnel Joe" Holmes

WALLACE SHUGG

On Monday, February 19, 1951, newspaper headlines in Baltimore City heralded the astonishing escape from the Maryland Penitentiary of thirty-nine-year-old Joseph E. Holmes, formerly known as "the dinner-time burglar." The first details to emerge could only have made readers shake their heads in wonder: Holmes had apparently cut his way through nearly two inches of slate flooring in his cell plus ten inches of concrete, dug a seventy-foot tunnel through earth and clay under the massive stone wall of the prison and up onto the grassy plot alongside Eager Street, easily climbed the seven-foot iron fence, and vanished into the night. The feat excited the public's imagination, leading to numerous false sightings in and around the city, and instantly earned him the new tag of "Tunnel Joe." As the full story unfolded, readers could only admire the daring, determination, and engineering skills shown by Holmes, the only inmate ever to tunnel his way out of Maryland's maximum-security prison.[1]

Before his escape, Holmes had been in and out of various penal institutions for twenty-three years, beginning with the Baltimore City Jail in 1928, where at the tender age of sixteen he spent ten days for breaking and entering. Thereafter, he pursued his chosen trade diligently, serving four sentences of two to three years at the Maryland House of Correction in Jessup and the Maryland Penitentiary whenever his luck ran out—until hit with a twenty-year stretch in the penitentiary by an obviously fed-up judge, who said Holmes had "as bad a record as any I have seen before this court." Toward the end of his career, Holmes had thoughtfully focused on burglarizing affluent homes in the Roland Park–Guilford area, entering boldly at dinner time while the residents were supposedly gathered round the table and busy with their food, thereby earning himself the tag of "the dinner-time burglar."[2] For the next ten years, Baltimore heard nothing further from Maryland Penitentiary inmate Joseph Ellsworth Holmes (#32565).

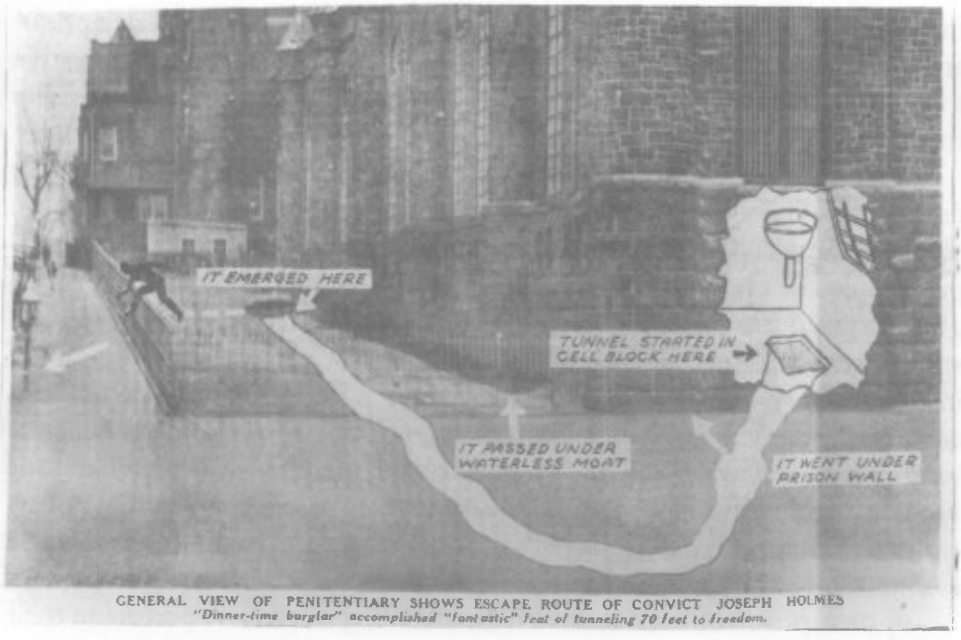
Then on Sunday morning, February 18, 1951, at 9:15, cellhouse officer George P. Gearhart became curious and unlocked the barred door of Holmes's cell and prodded the apparently still-sleeping man, only to discover a pillow wrapped in a blanket. His foot chanced to touch an uneven edge in the floor surface under the cot. Stooping down, he found a square piece of the slate flooring nearly two

Wallace Shugg has written a history of the Maryland Penitentiary, to be published by MHS early in 1999.

inches thick cut into a trapdoor and hinged to the wall. He lifted it and looked down into a narrow tunnel that went through ten inches of concrete and beyond that into the damp and darkness.[3]

Gearhart called Warden Edwin T. Swenson. Not knowing whether Holmes had escaped or was still somewhere in the tunnel, the warden sent down a volunteer guard, Arthur Newsome, to explore. Holmes had made the tunnel just large enough for himself. The somewhat larger Newsome removed his shoes and stripped himself naked but still could not fit into the concrete opening until it had been chipped and widened. Entering feet first, Newsome began the claustrophobic and dangerous trip through the underground tube.[4]

From the floor of the cell, the tunnel dropped almost vertically for five feet, then slanted downward in a series of steps, forcing Newsome to wriggle like a snake. At length he entered a chamber about six feet in diameter and tall enough for a man to stand up in, but filled with muddy sludge to chest level. The walls had been buttressed with mudpacked trousers and shirts to prevent a cave-in



Above: The penitentiary's west wing and tunnel route. This photograph appeared in the Baltimore News-Post, February 19, 1951. *Holmes's escape sparked enormous interest in Baltimore's African-American community, and the* Baltimore Afro-American *ran the same photograph with a different caption on March 3, 1951. (Photograph courtesy Maryland Division of Correction.)*

*Opposite: "Tunnel Joe's" escape route from the Maryland State Penitentiary's west wing onto the grassy plot on Eager Street. At left an official looks into the tunnel entrance in Holmes's cell. A second prison official examines the exit on the grassy plot. (*Baltimore Sun, *February 19, 1951. Photograph courtesy Maryland Division of Correction.)*

and possible live burial, Newsome continued to worm his way, now head first, to a depth of twenty-six feet, where the shoulder-wide path passed under the base of the five-foot thick prison wall. Beyond and adjacent to the wall was a four-foot-wide concrete dry moat, which the tunnel cleared by inches. From there, Newsome found, it angled eighty degrees upward and surfaced in a grass plot, the opening only fourteen inches wide. At least one thing by now was clear—their bird had flown.[5]

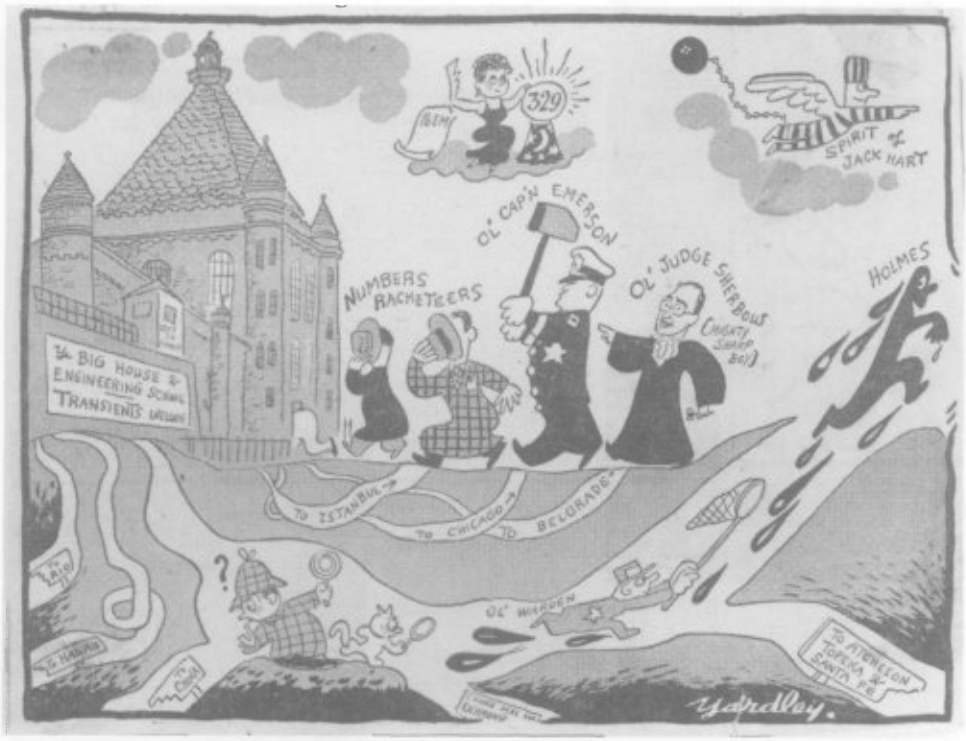
Prison officials reacted with shocked disbelief, tinged with grudging admiration. "It's the most fantastic escape I've ever heard of," Warden Swenson was quoted as saying, "that guy must have been an engineer." The warden guessed it had taken Holmes two years to claw out the tons of dirt, bit by bit, and flush it down his cell toilet, probably between 5 and 10 P.M., when the radio programs broadcast over the prison's public address system would have drowned out the noises in his cell. Most baffling, according to the warden, was "how Holmes

managed to do the work of a sand hog and still maintain immaculate appearance." The warden and his staff were so engrossed by their speculations that they neglected to alert the Baltimore City police until five and a half hours after the escape was discovered.[6]

More enlightening details surfaced in the later editions of the newspapers on Monday. The square trapdoor cut from the slate flooring had split and been lined on its underside with plywood and metal fastenings. As shown by newspaper photos, the plywood had suffered rot and the hardware was almost rusted away, suggesting its existence before Holmes began his project. Warden Swenson speculated that he had discovered the beginnings of a tunnel when he moved into the cell two years earlier and had exploited the opportunity. The ten-inch concrete barrier was not steel reinforced and not as hard as the newer concrete in use after 1899, when the building was constructed. In his trip through the tunnel, guard Arthur Newsome had discovered six pieces of scrap iron apparently used for digging. Also, a dozen pairs of old pants and pajama bottoms used as sandbags to carry out the dirt.[7]

By now, prison officials seemed to be assuming a defensive posture in their remarks to the press. The underground chamber could have been a natural fault in the soil or the work of soil erosion from a leaking storm sewer, said the warden. He also expressed his surprise that the concrete floor was only ten inches thick, whereas more modern prisons had floors that went much deeper. Superintendent of Maryland prisons Harold E. Donnell blamed an inadequate guard force, saying that prison management had asked for an appropriation sufficient for 119 guards when submitting its last budget but had been granted enough for only 109.[8]

And by now, the public was voicing an array of opinions about the great escape: facetious, admiring, harsh, and downright loony.[9] "I perceive great possibilities in this man'" said former Baltimore City Supreme Court Judge Eugene O'Dunne, who forty years earlier had headed an important investigation into penitentiary affairs.[10] "Perhaps it might be well for him to be captured . . . then there might conceivably be a pardon, decorations for ingenuity and two years' back pay, with overtime for the labor Holmes performed on Saturdays and Sundays." One patrolman admired Holmes's patience and thought he deserved to remain free, while another believed he deserved solitary confinement as an example to other prisoners. A Baltimore publicist wanted to make Holmes the "Escapee of the Year," for being "the most dramatic escapee since Jean Valjean." She also believed he should be sent to Washington to head one of the Senate investigating committees: "Mr. Holmes has demonstrated, with tremendous success, his abilities as a prober. He is one man who can justifiably claim to have really reached the bottom of things." Another citizen called Holmes "a gold mine of distorted abilities." A psychiatrist called him a "born engineer . . . just the man to solve the problem of constructing a tunnel under Baltimore harbor."



Cartoonist Yardley poked fun at embarrassed city officials. "The Spirit of Jack Hart" referred to another prisoner famous for his many escape attempts, two of them successful in 1924 and 1929. (Baltimore Sun, *February 22, 1951. Courtesy, Maryland Division of Correction.)*

Lastly, and apparently in all seriousness, a teacher of creative writing saw Holmes "as one of the most original thinkers in Baltimore . . . every teacher likes to have just such a pupil in his class: one with a challenging mind who sees beyond the ordinary barriers of an educational format to the goal that lies beyond."

A kind of mass hysteria arose, too, beginning with a Curtis Bay tavern owner who claimed to have seen the escapee and a companion enter his establishment on Pennington Avenue on Sunday night. He then called the police on Monday after having seen Holmes's photo in that day's *Sun.* By Monday evening, police had received a half-dozen reports of other sightings of Holmes in northwest Baltimore that also turned out to be false.[11] On Tuesday, police were called in to break up a traffic jam at Eager and Forrest streets caused by curiosity seekers gathered to stare at the tunnel opening. And on Wednesday a running man in downtown Baltimore was stopped by a patrolman who, when told his name was Holmes, called for backup. The man proved to be John Holmes, a B&O railroad porter, running to escape the rain.[12]

The weekly *Baltimore Afro-American* hailed the escapee as "Baltimore's Hero

Mrs. Mary Ruiz. "I have very good luck tonight."

Patrolman Frank Plunkett. "The gun clicked twice."

Sergeant James Downes. "Hey, you're Holmes!"

Three people instrumental in Holmes's capture. (Baltimore Sun, *March 4, 1951. Courtesy, Maryland Division of Correction.)*

No. 1," describing him as "a fearless person, with unbridled nerve, fantastic engineering skill, strong determination, admirable patience and fortitude." This same issue carried numerous photographs, beginning with one of Holmes's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Holmes (who issued an appeal to their son to give himself up), beneath a larger one of Joseph at age seven, a drawing of his escape route entitled "How Enterprising Convict Flew the Prison Coop," and a full-page spread of his cell and tunnel entrance and exit.[13]

The story of the escape was picked up by the wire services and carried in the *New York Times*[14] and other papers all the way to California. In the aftermath, Warden Swenson received a letter from Captain H. L. Stallings of the Division of Correction in Los Angeles, asking for photos and diagrams of the "amazing escape." The captain taught a course in penal administration at California State College and wanted the material to instruct correctional officers in the California prison system on how to prevent such escapes.[15]

Police questioned Holmes's parents and sister, who lived near the penitentiary in the 500 block of West Preston Street. They denied any knowledge of his plan to escape and reportedly had "practically disowned him." Also questioned without success were a former girlfriend of Holmes and another friend who lived near Philadelphia.[16] But the trail was cold and remained so for two weeks.

Then on Saturday, March 3, at 7:50 P.M., Mrs. Mary Ruiz, a sixty-four-year-old grandmother who worked as a cook for Mrs. John W. Garrett, 4545 North Charles Street, was walking home from work when she was accosted at the base of the Washington Monument by a man in a brown coat and fawn hat who pointed a gun at her, took her pocketbook containing $5, and disappeared. She ran to a nearby store to report the holdup.[17]

Minutes later, Officer Frank Plunkett spotted a man at Monument and Cathedral streets fitting the robber's description just broadcast over his car radio. Plunkett got out of his car and grabbed the suspect by the arm. The man thrust a .32 caliber revolver into his stomach, and Plunkett heard the gun click twice, miraculously misfiring. Drawing his own service revolver, the patrolman chased the suspect through the nearby streets and alleys and fired all five shots. He was joined by Sergeants James Downes and William Kohler, who exchanged shots with the suspect. The chase through Saturday night crowds ended at the Recreational Bowling Alleys at Howard and Monument streets, where the visibly tiring suspect sought refuge. There he was discovered and disarmed by Downes, who looked at him closely and exclaimed, "Hey, you're Holmes!" The man gasped, "Yes."[18]

At police headquarters, Holmes was photographed—his fawn hat perched at a rakish angle—and questioned for an hour, during which time he "appeared relaxed and unexcited" and "consumed several bottles of soft drink."[19] His story provided additional details about his escape, some possible or in agreement with the known facts, others not.[20]

The decision to tunnel his way out, he said, came on July 8, 1949, some months after Swenson became warden and tightened up prison discipline, taking away an inmate's chance to earn a little money by selling handmade knick-knacks to the others. "I had no future to look forward to," he said, and feared he would "blow his top." To raise money for the escape, he turned to illegal activities, taking bets on numbers and horses, and accumulated $152.

He began by cutting through the slate, he told his interrogators, denying a suggestion that he had discovered a trap door made earlier by someone else. Using a couple of drill bits and an inch-thick stick with a nail driven in one end, he bored holes through the slate very close together in an ellipse twenty-eight by seventeen inches—it took about forty days—and hinged the top several days later. He concealed his work on the slate by filling in the cuts with cement dust.[21]

Working between 5:30 and 8 or 9 P.M. while the radio was on, he chiseled through the concrete underneath, using as a hammer a piece of iron wrapped in a cloth to muffle the noise—and requiring about five months. Then, barefoot and wearing only shorts and an undershirt, he dug out the dirt, carried it up in a hand-sewn cloth bag, and flushed it down the toilet. For light he made a lamp by filling a small bottle with kerosene and sticking a wick through the cap. This he would place in a niche dug in the tunnel wall while he worked. Asked how he got air, Holmes replied, "It is not stuffy down there. There is oxygen in the water. . . . If the light burns, you are all right."

Water seeped into the underground chambers, he said, and he had to cut a drain under the adjoining cell into which he would bail out 125 to 140 gallons a night,[22] depending on how much it rained. Every rain would cause more dirt to fall, which had to be removed. After nineteen months, he at last came to make a one-inch opening in the grass turf through which he saw stars. "That gave me a deal of satisfaction." He returned to his cell for his clothes. The next morning, dragging his clothes behind him, he wriggled through the tunnel, taking forty-five minutes, and at 1:15 in the morning emerged onto the grassy plot. He slipped off his muddy underwear and put on his clothes, then walked past the warden's residence, where the dogs were sound asleep, and climbed the fence.

He had been forced to return to Baltimore, he told them, because he could not find a job in Philadelphia for lack of a social security card.[23] As he was being led back to his jail cell, he was heard to say to no one in particular, "I was a fool. You can't get anywhere these days without a Social Security card." Because of his spotty employment record and years in prison, Holmes may have been unaware that he could easily have obtained a social security card.[24] The *Afro-American* offered its own explanations for his return, which deserve consideration. "Consciously or unconsciously," Holmes meant to be caught. "He did not know what to do with his freedom." He was homesick, missed the orderly routine of prison life (regular meals, recreation periods) to which he had grown accustomed over

the previous eight years. Also, back in Baltimore where he was known, he could bask in the glory of his feat.[25]

Long before his arraignment on Monday, a curious crowd had gathered at the Central Police Station. Shortly after 3:30 P.M., Holmes was led in, nattily dressed in a green shirt with the collar open and a green sweater showing underneath at the throat. The charges against him were read off: being an escaped convict, carrying a deadly weapon, robbing Mrs. Ruiz at gunpoint, and assaulting patrolman Plunkett with intent to kill. Holmes pleaded guilty to all but the last. He was handcuffed and taken away, heavily guarded, to the city jail in a special wagon with two patrolmen and a lieutenant, followed by a prowl car.[26]

By the time of his trial on April 3, Holmes had acquired two lawyers, Ernest L. Perkins and Leroy A. Cooper, also black, on whose advice he denied his earlier confession and pleaded guilty only to the charge of escaping from the penitentiary. During the four-hour proceedings, he displayed a casual attitude, even on the witness stand, where he sat in the swivel chair, slumped and relaxed and swaying from side to side. His testimony introduced new details about his escape: it took only eleven months instead of the nineteen previously stated; to raise money for the escape, he had sold two pints of bootleg whiskey a week, made from a small still rigged up in the ventilator of his cell; and he had used a small electric drill (stolen for him by another inmate) to cut through the slate, improvising a heavier fuse in his cell to carry the extra electric power needed for the drill. He again denied exploiting any previous excavations in or under his cell. The jury deliberated for only fifteen minutes, and their verdict was read out to the packed courtroom: Holmes was guilty of all charges.[27]

Before his sentencing, Holmes allowed himself to be interviewed for an hour and a half at the city jail by Vincent Tubbs, assistant managing editor of the *Baltimore Afro-American.* He obviously opened up to his sympathetic listener, and Tubbs, an especially keen observer, gave an almost cinematic picture of the mercurial escapee that is worth quoting at length.

> When slightly excited or when trying to speak a big word where he is not sure of his pronunciation, "Tunnel Joe" stutters. . . . His brow is furrowed but his eyes are bright and inquisitive. . . . One of his eyes, the left, is slightly cocked and there is a scar on the bridge of his nose. After he has used all the words he knows to explain something, he puts his hand to the bridge of his nose, closes his eyes and searches his mind for other ways to say it.
>
> His mind is faster than his tongue—and his tongue is plenty fast. He jumps from one subject to another, not because he is scatter-brained, but because he has so much to say and the words he wants don't come as fast as the thoughts.

> His hands are busy . . . twisting and turning his pencil. . . .
> He smiles easily, exposing irregular tobacco-stained teeth, the two front of which are gold. The incisor on the left side of his face is missing. And the right side of his face seems more full than the left.
> His hair is wavy, and specked in places with gray.

Aside from his escape, "of which he is inordinately proud," Holmes talked about "his favorite subject—the prison system, the lack of opportunity for released prisoners, and his own future." At one point he told Tubbs, "I was baptized Catholic, but . . . my Mother is God to me. She's the closest material thing if you want to think about God that way." Toward the end of the long article, Tubbs quoted the conflicting opinions of psychiatrists about Holmes's mental condition: "One says he is 'good' and another says he is 'bad.' One says he is a pathological liar." Any problems Holmes might have had Tubbs regarded as "prison-induced, . . . easily remedied through an effective rehabilitation program. He concluded that the escapee was "of a certainty, martyr to the proposition that there is something radically wrong in the Maryland State Penitentiary."[28]

On April 13, Judge Joseph Sherbow pronounced the new sentence: five years for the escape from the penitentiary, to run concurrently with five years for the armed robbery of Mrs. Ruiz and fifteen years for the assault with intent to murder patrolman Plunkett, these latter terms to run consecutively to each other, for a total of twenty years. Along with the ten years yet to serve for burglary, Holmes now faced thirty years more in prison,[29] which if served entirely would mean release in 1981.

Back at the penitentiary, for the next ten years at least, the now famous "Tunnel Joe" was a kind of hero to the other inmates, with whom he did not deign to socialize. Nor did he give up thinking about escape. He was subjected to frequent shakedowns and put into segregation for possession of contraband tools, including on one occasion a hacksaw blade sewn into the sole of his shoe from heel to toe. He seemed to enjoy making fun of the frisking process, coming out of his cell with his arms and hands held up, as if to say "I'm all yours." But by the late 1960s he had become "Old Man Joe," at least to the correctional officers. His hair had turned gray, and he suffered from arthritis. As the result of a stroke, his right shoulder drooped, his right hand was held in a claw, and he dragged his right foot when walking. The once natty Holmes no longer took interest in his personal appearance, leaving his shirttail hanging out and his fly open. According to one observer, he never spoke to the guards and performed his cleaning duties in the yard "like clockwork," needing only to be pointed to the next place to do his sweeping.[30] Perhaps because of his infirmities, he was paroled on October 27, 1970, with a little more than ten years left to serve.[31]

Although no parole records of Holmes survive, a picture of his mental and

physical condition during his last years emerges from the recollections of his former parole officers. The first, Michael C. Davidson, remembers making a special trip in his car to pick up Holmes at the penitentiary and bring him to his office because, he says, "Holmes was like a baby coming into the world—no jetliners or Jones Falls Expressway existed twenty years before." According to Davidson, the fifty-eight-year-old Holmes "looked 75, walked like an old man, stooped, shuffling, with no energy." Nevertheless, it appears that Holmes was still up to having a little fun with his young supervisor, saying he had used a garden trowel to dig his tunnel, when no such tool was ever found or mentioned in the escapee's statements.

Clearly, Holmes had become institutionalized by his long years in the penitentiary. Davidson and subsequent parole officers Alan Feikin and Mark Moessinger visited him every month at his sister's house in the middle of the 900 block of Edmondson Avenue, across the street diagonally from the Enon Baptist Church. He lived on the second floor in the front room, which was furnished as austerely as a prison cell with only a metal cot, mattress, and green army blankets, and a folding chair—no radio or television. He wore loose, baggy, prison issue denim, with the pants cuffs rolled up, prison style. His parole officers remember him as a chainsmoker, the hardwood floor of his room being strewn with cigarette butts. His sister once called Davidson about a fire in the room, at which time the mattress had to be tossed out the window onto the sidewalk.

But Holmes managed to retain a sense of self-worth based on his memorable feat. Although he seemed mostly "quiet, sulky, and withdrawn," Davidson remembers him saying that he wanted to get together with "The Birdman of Alcatraz" (inmate Robert Stroud, about whom a film was released in 1962) and became "agitated" when Davidson told him the Birdman was dead. And at one point, Davidson recalls, Holmes went to the offices of the Baltimore *Afro-American* newspaper hoping to get someone there to write up his escape story.[32]

Little is known about Holmes's last days. He was a member of the Enon Baptist Church on the corner, but given his slovenly dress and anti-social ways, it does not seem likely he attended services regularly, if at all.[33] Be that as it may, he remained a celebrity throughout Baltimore's black community.[34]

Sitting in his room all day and chainsmoking could only have worsened the health of this survivor of an earlier stroke. He died at the University of Maryland Hospital on April 17, 1973, and was buried at Mt. Auburn Cemetery without a headstone to mark his last descent underground.[35]

NOTES

1. The only previous underground escape was made in 1889 by John Burke, who did not dig a tunnel but sawed the bars over a sewer opening and crawled through the pipe to the Jones Falls ("20 Escapes Made from Pen Since '89," *Baltimore Evening Sun,* February 19, 1951). A half dozen or so prisoners over the years have tried to tunnel out of the penitentiary but their attempts have all failed or were discovered in time.

Only one escapee, who took an aerial route, matched Holmes's planning and nerve. On December 13, 1946, twenty-nine-year-old Peter Bernackie made a running broad jump—seventeen feet horizontally and fifteen feet downward—from the top of a workshop building to the top of the east wall. He then dropped twenty-two more feet to the sidewalk and a waiting car ("Convict Aided in His Escape, Warden Says," *Baltimore Sun,* December 14, 1946). According to retired Captain Robert L. Burrell, Bernackie had trained for weeks for the escape by jumping over a row of fifty-gallon drums, adding one at every stage until he could make the distance (interview with Robert Lee Burrell, August 1, 1988).

2. "Holmes Served First Term at 16," *Baltimore Sun,* February 19, 1951.
3. "Convict Tunnels 70 Feet and Escapes Pen," ibid.
4. Ibid., and "Convict Digs 70-Foot Tunnel, Escapes Pen," *Baltimore News-Post,* February 19, 1951.
5. "Convict Tunnels 70-Feet and Escapes Pen," *Baltimore Sun,* February 19, 1951.
6. Ibid.
7. "Convict Digs 70-Foot Tunnel, Escapes Pen," *Baltimore News-Post,* February 19, 1951, and "Hunt for Escapee," *Baltimore Evening Sun,* February 19, 1951.
8. "Tunnels Seen Damaging Pen Foundations," *Baltimore Sun,* February 20, 1951, and "Prison to Seek More Tunnels," *Baltimore News-Post,* February 20, 1951.
9. "Some, Amazed at Escapee, Hope Holmes Keeps Freedom," *Baltimore Sun,* February 20, 1951.
10. See this writer's "The Rise and Fall of Warden John F. Weyler at the Maryland Penitentiary, 1888–1912," *Maryland Historical Magazine,* 86 (1991): 245–69.
11. "Prison Escapee Believed Seen in Curtis Bay," *Evening Sun,* February 20, 1951.
12. "This Holmes Ran to Escape Rain." *Baltimore Sun,* February 22, 1951.
13. *Baltimore Afro-American,* March 3, 1951.
14. "Digs 70 Feet To Freedom," *New York Times,* February 19, 1951, 17, col. 7.
15. "Calif. College Asks Data on Pen Tunnel," *Baltimore News-Post,* February 23, 1951.
16. "Lack of Checking Cited in Escape," *Baltimore Sun,* February 21, 1951.
17. "Cook Tells How Holmes Held Her Up," *Baltimore Sunday Sun,* March 4, 1951.
18. "'Tunnel Joe' is Captured Downtown," Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. A complete transcript of his interrogation was published a month later at the time of his trial. See "Holmes Answers Queries About Prison Escape," *Evening Sun,* April 3, 1951.
21. The details here seem incomplete and puzzling. Perhaps Holmes used an electric drill (mentioned later) to drill the holes and then filed away the partitions between them with the nail driven in the end of the stick. The "forty days" has a biblical ring and is therefore suspicious. No matter—his feat still would have been impressive even if he had discovered the trap door already made.
22. The amount of water seems enormous, perhaps exaggerated. Moreover, no bailing instrument was ever found or mentioned in his statement.

23. Contradicted at his trial, when he presented a Social Security card obtained in Pittsburgh using an alias and said he had returned to Baltimore hoping to get a job as a steward on a freighter. See "Jury Finds Holmes Guilty on 3 Charges," *Baltimore Sun,* April 4, 1951.
24. "No Social Security for 'Tunnel Joe,'" *Baltimore Sunday Sun,* March 4, 1951; "Security Card Was Holmes's if He Had Only Asked for It," *Evening Sun,* March 6, 1951.
25. "Why 'Tunnel Joe' Came Back Home," *Baltimore Afro-American,* March 17, 1951.
26. "Holmes Came Back to City to Get Ship Out of Country," *Baltimore Sun,* March 6, 1951.
27. "Jury Finds Holmes Guilty," and "Had Small Drill, Holmes Asserts," *Baltimore Sun,* April 4, 1951. The improvisation of a heavier fuse was impossible, inasmuch as the cell fuseboxes were located out of the inmates' reach. And the ventilator of his cell could hardly have housed even a small still. Telephone interview with retired penitentiary correctional officer and maintenance specialist Clarence Hall, March 20, 1996. It is difficult to say whether these and other embellishments or exaggerations by Holmes were intended as put-ons or to be taken seriously, to magnify his ingenuity.
28. "Tunnel Joe Martyr for Prison Reforms," *Baltimore Afro-American,* April 21, 1951.
29. "Holmes Gets 20 Years; 10 Still on Old Term," *Evening Sun,* April 13, 1951.
30. These descriptive details about Holmes at the penitentiary in the 1950s and 1960s were contributed by retired correctional officers Clarence Hall (March 20, 1996), Theodore Purnell (October 16, 1992), Donald Visser (March 22, 1996), and Warden Eugene Nuth (December 16, 1994).
31. Maryland Penitentiary file #32565.
32. Telephone interviews with Mark Moessinger (March 1, 1996), Alan Feikin (March 2, 1996), and Michael C. Davidson (March 11, 1996).
33. Telephone interview March 8, 1996 with Mrs. Irene Montague, custodian of records at the Enon Baptist Church. The wife of the pastor at the time does not remember him attending, according to Mrs. Montague.
34. "He was a folk-hero," according to Leroy Brown, superintendent of Mt. Auburn Cemetery, who was only ten years old in 1951 but remembers hearing adults talking about Holmes's escape (telephone interview, March 22, 1996). "I remember 'Tunnel Joe'—he was famous!" said Mrs. Lottie W. Cole, a retired medical records administrator and volunteer worker for the Mt. Auburn Cemetery (telephone interview, March 14, 1996). And when Mrs. Irene Montague of the Enon Baptist Church made inquiries for this writer, a younger member of the community was heard to exclaim, "'Tunnel Joe'—I thought he was a myth!" (telephone interview with Irene Montague, March 14, 1996).
35. Joseph Holmes's grave is located in private grove 5, #530 1/2 (interview with Mrs. Lottie W. Cole, March 14, 1996); interview with cemetery superintendent Leroy Brown, March 22, 1996.

Book Reviews

Courts of Admiralty in Colonial America: The Maryland Experience, 1634–1776. By David R. Owen and Michael C. Tolley. (Durham, N.C.: Carolina Academic Press, in association with the Maryland Historical Society, 1995. 458 pages. Appendices, bibliography, index. $45.00 cloth.)

David R. Owen, a practitioner of maritime law in Baltimore and past president of the Maritime Law Association of the United States, and Michael C. Tolley, assistant professor of political science at Northeastern University, have produced a thorough study of the formal practice of maritime law in colonial Maryland. Under the denomination "maritime law," the authors consider instance (seamen's wage disputes, carriage of goods, insurance, etc.), prize (capture of enemy vessels), piracy, and crimes at sea, as well as Navigation Act cases. *Courts of Admiralty in Colonial America* is largely an old-fashioned institutional history with particular emphasis on questions of jurisdiction, sources of authority, and procedure. The reader unfamiliar with them will learn a great deal, for instance, about the procedural differences between civil law and common law.

The authors state in their preface that they have sought to integrate two approaches to the history of law, the lawyer's, which focuses on "the examination of the substantive law, jurisdiction and procedure," and the social scientist's, which treats "law as a function of social, political and economic forces" (xix). Despite their claim, the former approach heavily dominates. The social scientist's approach is apparent mainly in analyses of charts that indicate the outcomes of various classes of cases according to the court in which they were tried, and according to whether they were tried with or without a jury.

Seriously diminishing the value of the charts is the absence of the records of the Court of Vice Admiralty from 1694 until 1754. The authors identify only nineteen cases heard by the court during those sixty years, compared with twenty-two cases during the remaining twenty-two years of the court's operation. This is, however, a study not just of the Court of Vice Admiralty, but of all the courts—including the Governor and Council, the Provincial Court, the General Assembly, the Chancery Court, and courts of oyer and terminer—that heard maritime cases. The authors appear to have exhausted extant official records of those tribunals.

Calling attention to the judicial role of the governor and council and to the protection the courts gave to seamen in disputes with shipowners and masters are among the work's valuable contributions. Jurisdictional competition between common law and civil law courts was generally absent. In contrast to Great Brit-

ain, Maryland's common law courts did not issue writs of prohibition against the admiralty courts. The paucity of prize litigation in Maryland, given that Maryland's colonial governors issued no letters of marque, may surprise those familiar with Maryland's reputation for privateering during the Revolution and War of 1812.

Owen and Tolley minimize even more than does Carl Ubbelohde (*The Vice Admiralty Courts and the American Revolution* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960]) any causal link between the vice admiralty courts and the American Revolution. Basing their conclusions on the Maryland experience, the authors find that the colonists highly valued the vice admiralty courts in their role as aids to commerce. Marylanders did not object to juryless trials in instance and prize cases but complained only of the role of the vice admiralty courts in enforcing new imperial taxes after the French and Indian Wars.

Owen and Tolley conclude that, in contrast to the distinct break in the practice of the common law in America between the colonial and federal eras found by Morton Horwitz (*The Transformation of American Law, 1780–1860* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977]), the practice of civil admiralty law experienced a marked continuity, even down to the present. This conclusion holds in matters of jurisdiction, substantive law, procedure, and court structure. Federal courts have decided that their jurisdiction over maritime matters is the broad jurisdiction granted to colonial courts and does not exclude several classes of matter, transpiring not on the high seas but within the bounds of a county, denied to admiralty courts in England. An example of continuity in substantive law involves the responsibility of ship owners for the medical care of crewmen. In 1962 the Supreme Court confirmed the 1823 judgment of Justice Joseph Story that traced the principle back through the practice of colonial vice admiralty courts, through that of the English High Court of Admiralty in the seventeenth century, and finally to the Laws of Oleron in the twelfth century.

In some ways this is an irritating book to read. Frequent repetition results from the chapters' being arranged topically rather than chronologically. The authors adopt the peculiar practice of using the letters "HCA" and "LHA" in the body of the text, thus forcing the reader to pause in order to translate them as "High Court of Admiralty" and "Lord High Admiral." Informal expressions, such as "they . . . did not get the point" (120), "the authorities . . . were fully cranked up" (129), and "they were not fast learners" (131) mar the text. And the authors pass several gratuitous judgments on modern court cases.

The authors' judgment on the case of *United States vs. Steinmetz,* involving the claim of the United States to a bell reputed to have come from the wreck of the Confederate Navy ship *Alabama,* for instance, is not only irrelevant to their argument, it is also wrong. The authors assert that the court was "entirely incorrect" in awarding the bell to the government, "because the *Kearsarge* never had

possession of the *Alabama*" (228). The documentary evidence shows that, before sinking, *Alabama* surrendered to *Kearsarge.* This was sufficient to transfer legal ownership to the United States, for according to the custom and law of the sea physical possession is not required: "Capture is complete when the vessel submits to the will of the captor, and this may be done without necessarily placing a prize crew on board." (C. John Colombos, *The International Law of the Sea,* 6th rev. ed. [New York: David McKay Company, 1967], 780). In addition, title to a vessel in the military service of the enemy—in distinction to a vessel in commercial service, which must be condemned by a prize court—vests immediately in the captor's government.

This study contains many worthy insights, along with much useful data. A one-hundred-page appendix contains summaries of every known maritime case heard in colonial Maryland. An additional value of the work is the bringing to the fore a body of source materials that should be of interest to historians of Maryland's maritime economy, as well as to legal historians. *Courts of Admiralty in Colonial America* is certain to stand for years to come as the definitive study of the practice of maritime law in colonial Maryland.

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Maryland's Blue and Gray: A Border State's Union and Confederate Junior Officer Corps. By Kevin Conley Ruffner. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997. 440 pages. Illustrations, maps, footnotes, bibliography, appendix, index. $34.95.)

Maryland suffered more from civil and military strife and divided loyalties than any other border state during the Civil War. Estimates vary as to how many men from the "Old Line State" served in the opposing forces. Probably more than 50,000 were in the Union army and anywhere from 15,000 to 25,000 may have served under the "Stars and Bars."

Maryland's role in the war has been the topic of numerous books and articles. Most of these studies have utilized only a handful of sources, particularly biased postwar memoirs of leading Maryland participants. Traditional accounts have placed Maryland's Civil War experience in the context of aristocratic cavaliers fighting for the Confederacy versus immigrant mercenaries serving the Union.

In *Maryland's Blue and Gray* author Kevin Ruffner tests this supposition with an exhaustive study of the 365 men who served as captains and lieutenants in the Eastern Theater with the Union Maryland Brigade of the Army of the Potomac and the "Maryland Line" of the Confederate Army of Northern Vir-

ginia. The author has consulted a multitude of sources combining both military and social history to tell the story. Census and voter registration records, county histories, newspapers, military records, letters, and diaries are among the types of data used.

His findings support much of the traditional story. Marylanders in Confederate ranks were by and large from the aristocracy of Baltimore and the southern part of the state. Indeed, these "Chevaliers" tended in Ruffner's opinion to see themselves as "the embodiment of a Sir Walter Scott tale" (289). Many of these men were of very high caliber and in the initial flood of patriotism sought only to serve the cause as privates. For example, in 1861 some of the rank and file of Company H, 1st Maryland Infantry included men from prominent families, such as Randolph H. McKim and McHenry Howard, and many had attended institutions of higher learning like Harvard and Princeton. After the drudgery of campaigning, the author observes, "the allure of enlisted life grew thin" (96).

Conversely, Ruffner concludes that Union officers in the Maryland Brigade had working or lower-middle-class origins and possessed little higher education by the standards of the day. Some such as Leopold Blumenburg, commander of the 5th Maryland (U.S.) were German immigrants (although in past studies the immigrant connection has been overstated). The majority came from either Baltimore or western Maryland. Many were of "Pennsylvania German" background with roots in Maryland going back more than a century; some were not natives of the state. One of the more bizarre cases was Gregory Barret Jr. of the 4th Maryland (U.S.), who had received his early education in violence as a member of a Baltimore street gang.

Much has been made of the contribution of Marylanders to the Confederate cause, though historians have largely ignored the problems they faced as exiles from their state attempting to maintain their military organizations in the Confederate army. At the beginning of the war Marylanders were greeted with open arms in the South and looked upon as refugees from Yankee oppression. This attitude began to change in late 1862 with the breakup of the 1st Maryland Infantry (C.S.) and the weak turnout of Marylanders to overthrow the "despot's heel" during the Sharpsburg Campaign. Ruffner notes that "Many southerners began to regard Marylanders as opportunistic freeloaders who escaped the Union draft and then enjoyed a carefree life in Richmond" (120–21). Fueling this resentment was the fact that these Marylanders were not subject to conscription "or other harsh wartime acts" (121) imposed on the rest of the Confederacy. Indeed, such prejudice was so prevalent that it became difficult even to establish a ward for Maryland troops in Richmond's Chimborazo Hospital.

Hard feelings were further exacerbated by the behavior of one Maryland command in particular—Major Harry Gilmor's partisan band known as the

2nd Maryland Cavalry Battalion. Gilmor's success at scouting and raiding along the upper Potomac and in the lower Shenandoah Valley was nullified by a propensity for freebooting. Both Unionist and Confederate civilians in Virginia complained of robberies and other depredations at the hands of his troopers. In August 1863 seventeen citizens of Winchester, Virginia, sent a petition to the Confederate government protesting the conduct of Gilmor's men. Such activity reached its zenith in 1864 when they robbed a Jewish merchant near Harrisonburg, an incident that resulted in Gilmor's court-martial and instructions directly from General Robert E. Lee to have the battalion amalgamated into regular Confederate service.

Although not hindered by the extremely poor discipline of Gilmor's command, other units had their problems. Petty jealousies between officers and enlisted men, and the lack of support from the central government in Richmond were factors in the disbanding of the 1st Maryland Battery (C.S.) and 1st Maryland Infantry (C.S.) in the summer of 1862. The latter group reorganized as the 2nd Maryland and served with distinction for the rest of the war.

Ruffner notes that Union Maryland units suffered problems too. Union units from other states doubted their loyalty. "Even as late as 1864, the army did not allow Maryland units to perform all duties" (261). The 5th Maryland Infantry (U.S.) was removed from duty guarding Confederate prisoners at Fort Delaware because they were thought to have too many southern sympathizers in their ranks. While Confederate Maryland units suffered more political turmoil, "Drunkenness among officers affected Maryland's Union regiments to a greater degree than the Confederate" (282).

Maryland's Blue and Gray is a ground-breaking work that will remain the most important study of this topic for years to come. This book is also one of the most thoroughly researched Civil War studies to appear in a long time. It has great value as both military and social history.

Ted Alexander
Antietam National Battlefield

Crossroads of War: Washington County, Maryland in the Civil War. By S. Roger Keller. (Shippensburg, Pa.: Burd Street Press, 1997. 320 pages. Bibliography, index. $29.95.)

Fans of the Civil War in Maryland and those interested in Washington County's local history will enjoy *Crossroads of War.* Scholars and those looking for a broader explanation of Washington County's significance for understanding the Civil War will be disappointed by this book. S. Roger Keller has collected numerous firsthand accounts, most of them previously unpublished, of the county's history during the war. The accounts generally are organized chrono-

logically and reflect the views of county residents and of soldiers on both sides who were either stationed in Washington County or grew up there. Taken as a whole, the material in this volume gives an impression of the county's continual engagement in the war that supplements histories of Antietam, the most famous wartime event to occur in Washington County. But for those who lack an abiding interest in the county's history or the battle of Antietam, much of the contents may seem to border on the trivial and anecdotal.

Keller provides readers with a relatively diverse sampling of impressions of the war years. The book begins with the correspondence of Angela Kirkham Davis, a native of Batavia, New York, married to a Funkstown grocer, who played hostess to soldiers, particularly officers, from both armies as Washington County passed back and forth between Union and Confederate control. Memoirs and correspondence include those of Caleb Washington Bingham, a boy in a Union farm family that lived in fear of Confederate depredations; Leighton Parks, who met Robert E. Lee and worked as an apprentice doctor; and a musician in the Army of the Potomac stationed in Williamsport in 1861. Other sections cover Antietam; military medicine practiced in Washington County, which has especially gruesome reports of amputations; excerpts from Anna Howell Kennedy Findlay's autobiographical *The Rochester House;* the previously unpublished diary of a Clear Spring private in the Union's 7th Maryland Infantry Regiment; and a list of sick and wounded Confederate soldiers recorded at Hagerstown and Williamsport.

As in all literary forms, some diarists wrote engagingly and others could be ponderous. Bingham's recollections of his childhood on a farm near South Mountain give a straightforward, readable account of his Unionist family's vigilant struggle to save their farm from Confederate raiders and local Confederate sympathizers. His narrative illustrates in ways that secondary sources might not convey the difficulties facing families whose politics clashed with those of the occupying military authority. On the other hand, the thirty-five page diary and family correspondence of Clear Spring's Private Dorrance consists of monotonous requests for more socks, food, and money, and tedious inventories of the regiment's movements in Maryland and Virginia. Readers looking for fresh insights into combat, common soldiers' attitudes on political and social issues, or even interesting details of camp life will have to read Dorrance's memoirs closely and patiently.

The unevenness of the entries encapsulates the main problem with *Crossroads of War.* Just as Private Dorrance could never get beyond the specifics of marches and meals to discuss his experiences more generally, this volume prizes any and all things related to Washington County so intensely that it fails to make a case for the county's relevance to the war or to other issues in the mid-nineteenth century. The fascination with the details of the county's wartime experi-

ence for their own sake may explain the inclusion of the twenty-seven-page list of Confederate casualties treated in Washington County after the battle of Gettysburg. The list reflects considerable research by Keller, and may be useful to those researching family history, but even a Washington County history buff might skip over this chapter for lack of interest.

Because so much of the material presented in *Crossroads of War* has been previously published, much of it recently and some of it in the pages of this magazine, the book does not dramatically ease access to primary source material. Instead, Keller's invitation is to "(open) wide the window of time to the mid-1800s" (vi). He might accomplish this goal more effectively either by drafting an account of the county's wartime history that situates its battlefield and home front experiences in the context of other regions familiar to readers of works by Philip Paludan, Wayne Durrill, and Grace Pauladino, among others. Or he could exercise more discretion in the selection of firsthand accounts to find voices from the past that themselves provide the insight into local events that is sometimes lacking in the memoirs compiled herein. Despite these criticisms, anyone curious about Washington County and its role in the Civil War will learn from this book.

Frank Towers
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The Indians' New South: Cultural Change in the Colonial Southeast. By James Axtell. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press. 116 pages. Illustrations, notes, index. $22.95 cloth; $9.95 paper.)

In three brief essays, originally presented as the fifty-eighth series of Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History at Louisiana State University in 1996, ethnohistorian James Axtell summarizes current scholarship on the patterns of interaction between Europeans and Indian peoples in the Southeast from 1492 to 1792 and the impact of those interactions on the lives of surviving "First Southerners." In clear, lively prose, Axtell presents a distillation of scholarship that limns European motives and approaches to the native Southeast but more importantly describes the problems native societies posed for intruding Europeans, the complex reactions of natives to European intrusion, and the immediate and long-term results of intercultural contact.

The motives and practices of Spanish, French, and English intruders are well known, but many readers may be surprised by the complicated interplay of European and Indian strategies, for here as elsewhere Indians were independent actors in the contact drama. The impact of European beliefs, ways, and products emerge here as considerably more complex than is commonly understood. As

Axtell states, "while its native population shrank and its native cultures changed in many remarkable ways in the three hundred years between 1492 and 1792, both the natives themselves and the colonial Southeast remained unmistakably 'Indian' throughout" (4).

The first essay, "The Spanish Incursion," begins with early Spanish exploration, intermittent slave raids, and shipwrecks, the latter presenting coastal peoples with castaways, gold, and other items. This essay proceeds to an analysis of the large interior expeditions led by De Soto and others that "blundered and plundered" through the region. Expedition commanders demanded that each chiefdom encountered supply bearers, feed the intruders, and provide women to slake Spanish lust. A cacique who refused tested the advantage of suffering an attack over acquiescing to quartering and supplying the Spanish. Either choice could lead to disaster. The loss of between four hundred and eight hundred men as bearers weakened a community for a long period. Since Spanish commanders fed bearers last and least, mistreated them, and released them from duty deep in a foreign chiefdom where they were subject to attack and enslavement, their loss might be permanent. Spanish destructiveness and diseases such as smallpox, influenza, and typhus triggered precipitous population decline that collapsed the political and religious structure of the Mississippian chiefdoms. Some groups relocated and new leadership lacked the coercive authority of earlier times. The towns of the Creek Confederacy have their origin in this tumultuous time. Despite the widespread disruption they caused, the Spanish were not able to dominate "La Florida."

The second essay, "The Widening Stain," traces the introduction of Spanish missions directed to convert the native population to provide needed labor, and the impact of the arrival of the English in Carolina. Spanish missions varied in achieving Spanish goals but were generally destructive of native lives and polities. Indian communities able to resist as well as those that fell under Spanish mission control were affected by English efforts to dislodge the Spanish and the growing competition for trade, land, and resources.

The third essay, "Making Do," traces the even more complex world that took shape with the appearance of the French in the lower Mississippi valley and the founding of Georgia in 1733. Along with the diminishing activity of the Spanish and the continued aggressions of South Carolinians, the new players created a balance of Europeans contending through trade, diplomacy, slave raiding, and war for allies, skins, and land. For much of the century Indian communities successfully traded deerskins for the cloth and metal tools that they had come to prefer. Alcohol and European livestock, combined with disease and European pressure, altered patterns of war and reshaped internal political and social relations and economic activity. By the late eighteenth century most Southeastern Indian societies had lost both the economic and political autonomy they had once enjoyed.

For those seeking an introduction to the place of Indians in the colonial Southeast this book seems a happy choice. It presents a carefully nuanced account of the complexities of interracial relations in the colonial Southeast. The Indian societies who met the Europeans were varied and vigorous. Throughout their earlier history Southeastern Indians had adapted to new conditions and challenges, but the arrival of Europeans and Africans sharply increased the pace of change. In this slim, engaging volume, James Axtell describes a New World that challenged the first southerners and their new neighbors and convincingly conveys the nature and the extent of their coexistence.

DOUGLAS D. MARTIN
Towson University

Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia. By Dell Upton. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997. 320 pages. Appendix, bibliography, glossary, graphs, index, notes, photographs, tables. $25.)

Holy Things and Profane was originally released in 1986 by the Architectural History Foundation (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press). Armchair historians and students of architecture will find this book engaging, though the novice is encouraged to make use of the preface, introduction, and glossary to best assimilate the information in the text. A caution: for the first third of the book Dell Upton, architectural historian and currently a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, does not always explain terms or include them in the glossary. It is advisable to have on hand a dictionary that includes architectural elements if unfamiliar with the field.

Clearly annotated, *Holy Things and Profane* provides references for deeper research into specific areas of interest. Evidence of extensive fieldwork is noted in Upton's identification of architectural differences between originally implemented plans and extant structures. Upton exploits religious as well as secular source information, personal diaries, and correspondence to provide a comprehensive, interdisciplinary presentation of history. He addresses inconsistencies between sources so that his conclusions are grounded, or they recognize a lack of extant evidence to provide a conclusive argument.

Judging by the number of books he has churned out on the subject, Upton's passion is the study of the vernacular. Formal issues such as building construction, the history of design influences, and social class are addressed but do not limit the scope of the text. While other publications are available which explore colonial churches, their architecture, and interiors, *Holy Things and Profane* presents the apparent, though heretofore neglected, social interplay of politics, people, tradesmen, and merchants.

Upton departs from formal architectural historical research and presenta-

tion to mend the rift between vernacular and high-style design. "The Anglican Church is not just Wren and the Renaissance, it is The Builders Dictionary, and the Reformation, and the gentry, and slave and indentured labor, and the taxation system. It is the vestries, and the builders, and the parishioners, and Virginia and England" (xxii). Because "the construction and use of churches was an absorbing activity for colonial Virginians" (xx), relationships between groups can be reconstructed through extant sources to reveal a pulsing antebellum society. This comprehensive view of society is absent and unappreciated when the material culture of these groups is explicated separately.

Upton begins literally at ground level, presenting reasons for, and methods of, site and construction choices. He then employs an iconographical methodology to segue from construction data, gleaned from account books and vestry minutes, to explicating ornamental design. Details such as reasons for pulpit design and placement are given (136–38). These design elements reveal the cultural dynamics of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Virginia society. Sometimes the revelations are not flattering, and it becomes clear that things reputed to be holy can be profaned. One typical example is the adornment of a church interior with tablets of the Ten Commandments: the donor's name is inscribed larger than the text of the commandments (172).

The author grounds a relationship argument of gentry social control firmly in the correlation of architectural and ornamental interplay shared by church and domestic building conventions. What we understand from the knowledge that gentry domestic conventions were implemented in church construction is that colonial gentry manipulated Church ideals for personal recognition. The Establishment church was a political group organized along religious lines—a prudent undertaking for a young colony. Early colonists ventured to Virginia to pursue economic affairs rather than for religious freedom (5).

While Upton reveals inconsistencies in church ideology and practice, both scholars and genealogists are aware of the legacy bequeathed the present by the records of the Church of the Establishment. Venerated as sacred space, churches were built better than average, more likely to be maintained over generations, and were less likely to be destroyed by fire or even war. Therefore, various extant resources, including record books kept under the protection of three locks and keys, survive to reconstruct society (140).

It is notable that while Upton unravels the story of antebellum Virginia in a colorful way, his text illustrations are black and white. Visually, then, a poignant argument is made for the contrast between the sacred and the profane. Black-and-white illustrations also help focus the viewer/reader on design elements discussed within the text.

The only polychromatic illustration is on the cover. The inconsistency between the actual colonial church ornamentation and the contemporary décor of

the cover illustration is worth noting. The flags of the United States and the Anglican Church flank the altar area in the cover illustration. Neither of these flags graced the altars of any colonial Establishment church. The flags replace the king's Royal Arms and the icons of the local gentry, which adorned colonial Virginia Anglican churches. Thus Upton foreshadows the ensuing battle within his text: how the Virginia Anglican Church adapted, or was lost, in the post–Revolutionary War era when "the legitimacy and the mores of the gentry-dominated Anglican Establishment" were challenged (xviii).

Upton purports that his text is dedicated to the uniqueness of Virginia architecture, yet he acknowledges style influences shared by Maryland and Virginia. One example discussed is a method of roof trussing employed in the Chesapeake region (44). He also acknowledges "Orlando Ridout V, Paul Touart, and Johanna Mennucci of the Maryland Historical Trust [who] measured and drew two Maryland churches for me" for use in this text (viii). Then too, advertisements for undertakers [building contractors] to design and construct Virginia churches were placed in Maryland as well as Virginia newspapers. One such undertaker of Virginia church construction discussed by Upton, William Buckland (1734–1774), relocated to work in Annapolis, Maryland, in his later years. It follows that construction designs would necessarily move with him.

Actually, previous scholars have established that Maryland and Virginia share architectural traits. Publications such as Cary Carson's, "The 'Virginia House' in Maryland," discusses this connection at length (*Maryland Historical Magazine* 69 (1974): 186). Then too, according to Henry J. Berkley's *Parishes of the Establishment, 1692* (tracing after Griffith's 1797 Map; 1936) there were at least sixty-six known Anglican churches in the province of Maryland by 1692. Even earlier Percy G. Skirven made his *Map of Maryland Showing Ten Counties and Thirty Parishes as Laid out in 1692–1694 in Accordance with the Law of 1692 Establishing the Church of England* (1923).

Upton examined in the field, explored the church records for, and discusses thirty-eight extant churches and seventy-five eighteenth-century parishes in Virginia. As indicated by the above two maps, Maryland had less than half the number of parishes than Virginia did at the same time. However, sixty-six Maryland Establishment churches are a significant number. Upton's information on Virginian vernacular domestic and church architecture can be related to Maryland construction of the same due to the architectural style similarities that are shared by Maryland and Virginia.

In *Holy Things and Profane,* Upton details location choices, architectural influences, and the role of style in antebellum Virginia Anglican church construction. His sketches, tables, and skillfully composed black-and-white photographs not only attest to his intimacy with his subject, but make this publication an affordable must-have personal professional reference or classroom text. At

$25.00 it is a bargain compared to comprehensive texts and reference books these days.

MARY E. HERBERT
Maryland Historical Society

An Abolitionist in the Appalachian South: Ezekiel Birdseye on Slavery, Capitalism, and Separate Statehood in East Tennessee, 1841–1846. By Durwood Dunn. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997. 320 pages. Bibliography, index. $36.00 cloth.)

In one of MacKinlay Kantor's Civil War stories, a Union soldier transferred from Maryland to East Tennessee marvels at how much more Union sympathy there is in the latter place than in the former. Couple this with the greatest irony of the Civil War, that Lincoln's successor, who presided over the defeated South, was himself a southerner from East Tennessee, and there comes into focus the intriguing question that this book helps to address: What made East Tennessee so different from the rest of the South?

As late as 1827, East Tennessee alone contained nearly one-fifth of all the antislavery societies in the United States and nearly one-sixth of the total membership. But by 1830 these societies had begun to erode, due to apathy and the antislavery rank and file's substantial emigration to the West. The completion of the railroad, which Ezekiel Birdseye had ironically hailed as the bearer of progressive ideas from the North, sealed Tennessee's economic fate with that of the lower South. Between 1850 and 1860 East Tennessee experienced a 21 percent increase in slaves and a corresponding proliferation of proslavery sentiment.

Even so, East Tennessee in its referendum of June 8, 1861, voted overwhelmingly against separation from the Union. A pro-Union East Tennessee Convention met at Knoxville on May 30 and later in Greeneville on June 17 to debate the issue of secession from Tennessee, although permission to secede was ultimately refused and failed to take place through force of arms.

Between 1841 and 1846 Ezekiel Birdseye (1796–1861) set down his antislavery observations about East Tennessee in letters to Gerrit Smith, a prominent New Yorker who arranged to have many of them published in antislavery newspapers such as the *Emancipator* and *Friend of Man.* Durwood Dunn, chairman of the Department of History at Tennessee Wesleyan College, has collated and meticulously annotated these letters (two-thirds of the book) and then prefaced them with four interpretive chapters.

In 1838 Birdseye had come to Newport in East Tennessee seeking to establish a free labor colony after spending twenty-some years in other parts of the South, which gave him the unique advantage of being able to describe the many nuances of slavery throughout the South. Comparing Virginia and East Tennes-

see, for example, he wrote that Virginians are "fond of their prejudices and ready to remind the traveller from the North that he is in the old dominion and that some homage is expected. Here we meet with nothing of that kind. Feelings are manifested and a wish expressed for more intimate acquaintance with the North. There is a restraining public sentiment which discountenances cruelty to the poor slave" (195).

But although "we have slavery in a mitigated form in E[ast] T[ennessee]," Birdseye admitted in 1842, "it has horrors enough here" (86), suggesting a harsher treatment of slaves in East Tennessee than historians have previously assumed. In the ongoing debate over the brutality of slavery Birdseye's major contribution may well be his exposure of the frequency of homicides (of slaves and masters) that otherwise would not have surfaced.

His letters record the reactions and attitudes of friends and neighbors toward atrocities of all kinds. One November day in 1841, for example, he came upon a slave tied to a tree about to be beaten. Birdseye was acquainted with the slave's owner, a Mr. Rice, and attempted to dissuade the master from administering the beating. Warily Birdseye inquired if the slave were a troublemaker generally, and then suggested a milder form of punishment. Apparently mortified that his rage appeared uncontrollable, Rice agreed, and the beating was averted. Slavery, Birdseye reasoned, brought out the worst in otherwise decent men. Not only did slavery harm the slaveholders morally, it harmed them economically as well, blighting entrepreneurial zeal and capitalist expansion. Further, it ground to dust the poor whites of the South since it demeaned their honest labor by identifying work with servility and inferiority.

Like other abolitionists, Birdseye, who grew up in Connecticut amid remarkable economic expansion, condemned the backwardness of the southern economy, the lack of discipline in southerners, the instability of family life, and the sexual abuse of female slaves. But it was his basic sympathy toward individual slaveholders that differentiated him from many other northern abolitionists. He was deferential and easy to converse with, and slaveholders frankly confessed to him their own private distaste of the peculiar institution. His cheerful personality nurtured a premature optimism that is everywhere evident in his letters, e.g., slavery "is tottering to its fall. One year of free discussion would overthrow it" (213).

Those most likely to challenge Birdseye's views on slavery were clergymen, who "have the most bitterness and least charity of all its defenders" (35). Birdseye's friend Frederick Augustus Ross (1796–1883) was one Tennessee Presbyterian clergyman who pivotally retreated from abolitionism to proslavery advocacy; in 1857 he published *Slavery Ordained of God* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott), claiming divine sanction for the peculiar institution.

Although Birdseye's letters resemble journalistic dispatches on the subject

of slavery, they also shed light on other national issues, such as Andrew Jackson's waning popularity in Nashville in 1841 and the death that same year of President William Henry Harrison, with whom Birdseye claimed to have been acquainted personally. While regretting Harrison's "subservency to slavery," Birdseye judged him as an amiable and generous man whose "sympathies for the poor or unfortunate were easily excited" (150). Modern readers may find lamentable that Birdseye had so little contact with Andrew Johnson and none at all with the Tennessee Unionist who would play a major role in the 1860 presidential election, John Bell.

The last letter to Gerrit Smith is dated March 25, 1846, and although Dunn appends a letter to Andrew Johnson written from Knoxville on February 20, 1861, Birdseye descended into virtual oblivion after 1846. After his death in June 1861 no obituary could be found in the Knoxville or Nashville newspapers, nor could the site of his interment in Knoxville be ascertained. Dunn can do little more than lament these troubling biographical lacunae in his epilogue and pose unanswerable questions about hypothetical activities. Although Birdseye did not survive to see an American nation freed of slavery, his letters demonstrate his unshakable faith in its eventual elimination and how tirelessly he worked toward that goal. By directing our attention to these remarkable letters, Dunn makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the complex ideological tensions that characterized the antebellum era of American history.

Jack Shreve
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The Battles for Spotsylvania Court House and the Road to Yellow Tavern, May 7–12, 1864. By Gordon C. Rhea. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997. 490 pages. Appendix, notes, bibliography, index. $34.95.)

May 1864 was destined to be one of the most significant months of the American Civil War. Newly appointed overall Federal commander Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant, in consultation with his successor as chief of the Army of the Tennessee, William T. Sherman, developed an ambitious battle plan designed to crush the Confederacy. While Sherman squared off against General Joseph E. Johnston in north Georgia, Grant would work with George G. Meade and the Army of the Potomac against Robert E. Lee and his celebrated Army of Northern Virginia. It is the engagements Grant and Lee fought from May 7 to May 12, 1864, that Gordon Rhea examines exhaustively in his book, *The Battles for Spotsylvania Court House and the Road to Yellow Tavern, May 7–12, 1864.*

Rhea's sequel to his book on the Battle of the Wilderness begins with a summary of what happened prior to the armies' move to the south after the fight on May 5–6. He argues that the battles that would follow at Spotsylvania marked a

"watershed in the accommodation of military doctrine to technology" (5). In the Wilderness, according to Rhea, both the Union and the Confederacy utilized trenches and earthworks to defend themselves. By the time the armies finished slugging it out at Spotsylvania, the Army of Northern Virginia in particular had "perfected the art of fieldworks" (6). As the author correctly points out, these battles stand in marked contrast to the early days of the war, when massed infantry assaults against an entrenched foe produced devastating casualties and little else.

Rhea divides his book into chapters that address the action on a particular day of the campaign. This chronological organization allows him to lead the reader through a detailed narrative that includes excellent and well-placed maps and stirring primary accounts by the soldiers themselves. Rhea's writing style is the book's strong suit: this is a fast-paced, well-written narrative of battle that cannot help but provide the reader with vivid images of what those hot and vicious days were all about. The author also allows himself—and the reader—to step back and question why Lee beat Grant to Spotsylvania. In these instances and elsewhere, Rhea seems to be critical of Grant's actions. According to him, Grant's plans were "too ambitious," and Meade (with whom Grant's relationship was less than genial) "neglected the details" (59). Rhea also faults the Union's corps commanders for failing to move quickly toward the strategic crossroads of Spotsylvania. Rhea notes that on May 8, when the armies first met, the Federals represented an army "without a firm sense of purpose and the will to see its plans through." He concludes that "Grant had fumbled in the Wilderness. As he groped toward Spotsylvania, there was no sign that he had learned from his mistakes" (59).

Federal actions on May 9 and 10 differ little from Rhea's portrayal of the Union's dismal initial engagement on May 8. According to Rhea, Grant kept making erroneous assumptions about what Lee would do and where. His biggest mistake, however, was allowing General Philip Sheridan to go after J. E. B. Stuart's cavalry. To Rhea, that raid was a "sideshow" to the more important engagement at Spotsylvania. More seriously, "Sheridan's absence hurt Grant at Spotsylvania in much the same way that Stuart' s absence from Gettysburg had handicapped Lee" (212).

Perhaps the most descriptive chapters of Rhea's book are those that discuss the slaughter at the Mule Shoe salient on May 12. Forever after known as the "Bloody Angle," the fighting on this sector was some of the most vicious of the war. Rhea's use of soldier diaries and reminiscences succeeds in bringing home to the reader how horrible war had become by the spring of 1864. Sadly for the participants, the fighting at the Bloody Angle led to little more than a bloody stalemate; by the wee hours of May 13, Lee had succeeded in withdrawing and forming a new salient. The stage was then set for the move to the North Anna River.

Most of Rhea's analysis is contained in his epilogue. Here he assesses the generalship on both sides. Though he gives Grant high marks for possessing a "strategic vision," he criticizes the Federal commander for his conception and execution of tactics (313). Lee, on the other hand, is praised for fighting an excellent defensive battle and for exercising close communication and coordination with his corps commanders.

This is a solid battle study. Rhea has culled an extraordinary amount of information from the primary literature, and it enhances his treatment. His analysis is generally well taken, though his argument for the importance of fieldworks does not seem to be developed as well as it might. One need only think ahead to Cold Harbor to realize that frontal assaults continued to be utilized with similarly devastating results.

The Battle for Spotsylvania and the Road to Yellow Tavern is a fitting sequel to his book on the Wilderness. Scholars and buffs will find this a good place to learn about those five bloody days in May.

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Liberty, Virtue, and Progress: Northerners and Their War for the Union. By Earl J. Hess. 2nd edition. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997. 172 pages. Notes, index. 24.95 cloth.)

When Earl Hess wrote the first edition of *Liberty, Virtue, and Progress* in the mid 1980s he sought to fill a gaping hole in Civil War historiography by providing an account of the values and beliefs that motivated and sustained the brutal and costly northern war effort. Hess rightly claims in a new introduction to this revised edition that historians who came after him have largely failed to follow his lead. Only a few authors have undertaken studies examining the cultural and social context within which Civil War soldiers developed their attitudes toward war, Hess argues, and those who have failed to extend their studies to encompass the beliefs and values of civilians or the effects of war on noncombatants. Given the questionable presentation of a static and singular "Northern opinion" in Hess's own work, this is all the more surprising.

Hess begins by suggesting that Americans had long been preoccupied with the fragility of their Republic, concerned with maintaining a balance between the power of the government and the freedom of the governed. Many antebellum northerners, he argues, still accepted the classical republican assumption that a virtuous citizenry was essential for the maintenance of self-government. Only by exercising self-control and civic responsibility did northerners believe they could counteract the dangers of rampant individualism. While such concerns had been voiced before the war, Hess asserts that the attack on Fort Sumter

"refocussed the sectional debate," convincing northerners that the rebels were no longer capable of controlling their passions and no longer willing to act for the common good. Linking the existence of government to the notion of self-government, northerners saw "the attack on one as an attack on the other." This perceived threat to self-government served to unite the North and promote, at first, an aggressively jingoistic patriotism.

The following chapters chart the effects of war itself on the patriotism of northern soldiers and civilians. In some of the book's most interesting passages, Hess traces the confrontation between the deeply held ideological motivations of soldiers and civilians and the physical and emotional costs of warfare. Here we get a sense of the war as an experience affecting the total population, as civilians nervously await news from the battlefield and masses of wounded men stream into cities and towns. The effect, Hess argues, was not to make northerners obsessed with their own pain and privation, turning their thoughts away "from contemplation of the larger good." Instead, he implies that the war was a coming-of-age experience for all northerners, with many civilians experiencing "much the same process of nervousness, shock and resolution that mirrored the soldier's initiation into battle." Northern attitudes toward war did not change, he believes, they merely "matured."

Having emphasized the continuity and homogeneity of northern attitudes towards war, Hess is hard-pressed to explain the enormous number of northerners who do not seem to fit this picture. He accounts for Copperheads and their supporters by suggesting that they were a "loyal opposition," critical of Lincoln's method of conducting the war, yet still faithful to his motive of maintaining the Union. Other forms of dissent, however, can not be so neatly dispatched. The author chooses to ignore the class and racial tensions evident in draft riots and the war-weariness registered in high desertion rates. He does, however, deal briefly with non-political forms of "unpatriotic" behavior, noting that support for the war "coexisted with much chicanery, selfishness, and debauchery," evident in the enormous amount of government funds expended on useless or shoddy items, the drinking, gambling, and whoring of soldiers on leave, the bounty-jumping and urban unrest. Yet such behavior appears in the text as anomalous. At war's end, veterans (and presumably civilians) purportedly "ignored" the fact that "a proportionately small group of dedicated soldiers carried the weight of each war effort while thousands of less scrupulous and less patriotic men reaped bounties and profits," stressing instead the same ideological convictions that had carried them into the war. The real change in cultural values, Hess believes, took place only at the end of the century, when the rise of consumerism sanctioned an "aggressive, accumulative individualism" that undermined a previous emphasis on self-denial and self-control. Not until then did liberty and progress become "divorced from virtue." But given the existence of these numerous "less

scrupulous and less patriotic" Americans, both during and after the war, one may question whether the late nineteenth century really marks such a watershed in values.

There is a good deal of nostalgia in Hess's argument, which perhaps accounts for why the author so insistently homogenizes northern opinion and marginalizes dissent. Northerners, Hess is at pains to tell us, really meant what they said (unlike us cynical moderns), and they were all in basic agreement about the main issues of the day. There are several major conceptual and methodological problems with this formulation. On the one hand, the author fails to examine the possibility that different groups of northerners may have used the same words to mean quite different things. Instead, he posits a "Northern consensus" and supports his argument by randomly quoting from a wide assortment of people—white and black, soldier and civilian, male and female, wealthy and poor—with little regard for the way race, class, or gender may have informed specific appropriations of republican nationalist rhetoric. Hess also seems oblivious to the fact that words can subtly change their meaning over time. To cite just one example, Hess quotes Jane Grey Swisshelm, a Washington-based nurse, who lauded the virtue of the soldier, urging survivors not to weep because "those who have died for a great purpose and gone directly to their great reward are the favored few." This quotation implies that virtue became specifically linked to soldiering over the course of the war. Furthermore, such a reformulated conception of virtue would presumably have held vastly different implications, and perhaps meanings, for those like Swisshelm, who could never be among the "favored few."

In this revised version, Hess describes his work as a "popular intellectual history." We should respect the ideas of the "common people," he asserts somewhat condescendingly, because although they had a "primitive" way of dealing with "intricate conceptions," they nonetheless sacrificed and died for their cause. While his attempt to include previously marginal voices and experiences is laudable, the author ultimately fails to do justice to the complexity of his historical subjects' ideas.

Frances Clarke
The Johns Hopkins University

With Charity for All: Lincoln and the Restoration of the Union. By William C. Harris. (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1997. 364 pages. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $37.95.)

With all that scholars have written about Abraham Lincoln, it seems strange that William C. Harris's new book, *With Charity for All: Lincoln and the Restoration of the Union,* provides the first comprehensive examination of Lincoln's

Reconstruction policy and its implementation in each of the southern states that experienced wartime federal occupation. Harris offers a challenging reinterpretation of Lincoln's plans for Reconstruction both during and after the war.

Harris contends that Lincoln pursued a conservative restoration policy. Lincoln envisioned neither a radical restructuring of southern society nor a revamping of federalism, but instead hoped to reestablish the relations between the seceded states and the Union that had existed before the war. Because of the Constitution's mandate that the federal government guarantee "republican" forms of government in the states, Lincoln deemed it his constitutional duty to initiate the process by which southern Unionists in federally-held areas undertook the "self-reconstruction" of their respective states. But once they had received this jump-start, southern Unionists were on their own in dealing with such issues as loyalty oaths, political proscriptions against rebels, the abolition of slavery, and the rights of former slaves. Lincoln thus reflected the thinking of many northerners that secession was the work of a small cohort of politicians who had inflamed the public mind. The mass of white southerners, whom Lincoln believed to be loyal, simply needed Unionist governments to rally around.

Until the announcement of his preliminary emancipation proclamation in September 1862, Lincoln tried to foster the establishment of loyal governments without attacking slavery. Except for creation of the "Restored Government of Virginia," Lincoln's first initiative bore little fruit. He even exempted Tennessee and other federally-held areas of the South from the Emancipation Proclamation in hopes that Unionists would return to the fold, but Unionist movements in these places faltered. Southern Unionists' inability to create loyal governments prompted Lincoln in December 1863 to issue his Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction. Spelling out the process by which the seceded states could return to the Union, the proclamation became the blueprint for Lincoln's restoration policy for the remainder of war. Although the amnesty proclamation called for rebels to recognize the abolition of slavery, Harris maintains that it preserved Lincoln's vision of conservative self-reconstruction.

The second half of the book traces the unfolding of Lincoln's restoration policy in Unionist parts of Tennessee, Louisiana, Arkansas, North Carolina, and even Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. Lincoln's plans encountered military setbacks, conflict between military and civil authorities, factionalism among southern Unionists, and other difficulties, the greatest of which was the failure of Lincoln's policy to attract popular support. Indeed, the degree to which Lincoln and others convinced themselves—despite all evidence to the contrary—that a groundswell of southern Unionism existed and need only be tapped remains one of the most perplexing problems of this era. Despite the shortcomings of his policy and criticism from Radical Republicans, Lincoln adhered to his conciliatory course. In his famous "last speech"—delivered only days before

his assassination—Lincoln indicated, much to the Radicals' dismay, that he intended to continue his policy after the war.

Harris's thesis gives rise to two important questions. First, speculating in the epilogue on what Lincoln might have done had he not been assassinated, Harris concludes that although Lincoln was determined to pursue a conciliatory policy, he would not have adhered to it in the face of southern recalcitrance, nor would he have allowed himself to become trapped by his own policy, as Andrew Johnson did. Instead, according to Harris, Reconstruction would have been much different under Lincoln. This supposition is sound enough, but it also appears to run counter to Harris's own contention that Lincoln displayed a certain inflexibility on the question of restoring the Confederate states to the Union.

Secondly, and more importantly, for a book devoted to Lincoln's Reconstruction policy, Harris gives surprisingly short shrift to the evolution of Lincoln's thinking on slavery and how he decided upon the Emancipation Proclamation. This deficiency undermines Harris's interpretation. Once Lincoln announced his intent to issue the proclamation, it was no longer possible to speak of restoring the antebellum status quo. The Emancipation Proclamation was not part of a broader conservative policy, as Harris suggests. Instead, it was a revolutionary measure that, despite its limitations, precipitated a recasting of the southern social order. The fact that Lincoln made emancipation central to his restoration policy rendered that policy not conservative but radical, for it dictated that white southerners who wished to return to the Union must acknowledge the destruction of their world. Restoration of the antebellum status quo was impossible after January 1, 1863, since the status quo could never be restored in a world without slavery.

Despite my disagreement with its thesis, this book boasts many strengths. Harris's command of the primary sources and the vast secondary literature is impressive. Laudable too is Harris's appreciation for the northern political context and his explication of the complex political maneuverings in the southern states. This clearly written work makes an invaluable contribution to the scholarship on Lincoln and the Civil War and Reconstruction era, and it is sure to become the standard work on Lincoln's Reconstruction policy. Scholars and other readers interested in this period of American history are advised to put this important book near the top of their reading lists.

John C. Rodrigue
Louisiana State University

Books in Brief

John H. Nelson's *"What God Does Is Well Done," The Jonathan Hager Files,* updates and expands earlier accounts of Hager and Western Maryland, such as John Thomas Scharf's 1882 work, *History of Western Maryland.* Curator of the Jonathan Hager house, and author of ten books, Nelson researched Hager's life for nine years. The author writes that while Hager may have been viewed earlier as a rugged frontiersman, he was socially ambitious and eager to succeed in land speculation. The book can be purchased at the Hager House, 110 Key Street, Hagerstown, Md., 21740.

City of Hagerstown, Md., $10.00

Sherry H. Olson's popular 1980 guide, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City,* has been revised and expanded in a bicentennial edition. First published at the peak of the city's downtown "renaissance," the book is celebratory but also analytical, addressing the ongoing problems of unemployment and poverty that continue to plague Baltimore and urban centers across the country. Appealing to scholars and residents of the city, the book includes an additional chapter and new illustrations. Olson's well-illustrated record borrows generously from collections at the Peale Museum, the Maryland Historical Society, the Maryland Room of the Enoch Pratt library, and the National Archives.

Johns Hopkins University Press, $24.95 paper

Historian W. Edward Orser's *Blockbusting in Baltimore: The Edmondson Village Story* describes the demographic shift in population that occurred in this West Baltimore community of roughly 40,000 residents. Examining the period between 1955 and 1965, the author argues that realtors persuaded white owners to sell their houses at under market value, and then encouraged black residents lacking access to conventional mortgages to purchase the homes at inflated market prices.

The University Press of Kentucky, $19.95 paper

A history of Charlotte Hall has been published by J. Roy Guyther, M.D. His book, *Charlotte Hall School, 1774–1976,* chronicles the history of the institution. Guyther describes athletic and military programs, literary societies, and student life. Also included are lists of trustees, headmasters, and alumni.

Charlotte Hall School Alumni Association, $12.00

D.B.S.

MHS Book Notes

John Gottlieb Morris: Man of God, Man of Science. By Michael J. Kurtz. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1997. 216 pages. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $20.00 paper.)

Surprisingly given the scope of his lifetime achievements, John Gottlieb Morris has been largely forgotten by the community he served so well. Nearly a hundred years after Morris's death, Michael J. Kurtz, assistant archivist at the National Archives, has corrected that omission with this careful biography. Born in 1803, the youngest son of a dominant mother and a willful father, Morris as a young man discovered a strong interest in scholarship and science at Princeton University, then chose a career in the ministry to escape the confines of his family in York, Pennsylvania.

As an ambitious young pastor, he settled in Baltimore in 1827 and immersed himself in the issues affecting the Lutheran Church, especially the struggle to gain acceptance of an English-language liturgy in the tumultuous decades preceding the Civil War. The analysis of controversial issues within the Church is fully and clearly detailed and adds dimension to scholarly awareness of the uncertainties—economic, social, and spiritual—in which Americans lived in the antebellum period. The emphasis here is clearly on religious history. Kurtz notes, for example, that Morris supported the Maryland Colonization Society rather than outright abolition, that he joined the Republican party and was a stout Unionist when war broke out, but there is little further discussion of politics.

As he rose in influence, Morris made contributions to education and scholarship. He pursued what became a lifelong interest in the natural sciences, wrestling with the great questions of Creation—attempting to reconcile science with scripture—and performing pioneering work in entomology. He founded the Lutherville Female Seminary and the town of Lutherville. He strongly supported the Lutheran Theological Seminary and Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg, the Maryland Historical Society, the Peabody Institute, and the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland.

At its heart, *John Gottlieb Morris* is the biography of a forward-thinking man in tumultuous times.

R.I.C.

Middling Planters of Ruxton, 1694–1850. By Joseph M. Coale III (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1996. 96 pages. Maps, photographs, chronology, index. $24.95 cloth.)

Intrigued by an abandoned neighborhood church, Joseph Coale began the search that grew into this history of Ruxton's "middling" planters. With the help of noted county historians John McGrain and George Horvath Jr., the author searched federal census and assessment records, Baltimore County land, probate, and tax records, and family histories and newspapers to reassemble the families and events central to his story. Coale likened the search to "exploring a lost civilization" (x) in his own backyard, and the work is underscored with his enthusiasm and commitment to the project.

The book opens with an overview of Ruxton's (then Roland Run Valley) development in the late seventeenth century as a cluster of farming families raising corn and cash crop tobacco on tracts with long-forgotten names like Samuel's Hope and Hector's Hopyard and continues through the nineteenth-century transition to a suburban village forever changed by the railroad, mining, and the Lake Roland Reservoir project. The author pays detailed attention to explaining the origins of the colonial land system that allows those unfamiliar with Proprietary law to understand how Ruxton's early settlers came to own these tracts. Coale then devotes the greater part of the work to reconstructing the founding families and their descendants and describes how each family participated in or was affected by local and sometimes national events.

There are more than two dozen maps and illustrations in this book that will add to the reader's grasp of this community located seven miles north of Baltimore. It is a community that the author claims still retains elements of rural character in the midst of twentieth-century bustle. Coale's familiarity with the area lets him relate past locales to present day sites with ease and will also help the curious reader who cares to go looking for these ancient homesteads and landmarks. In a broader sense, Coale offers the work as a minute look at a community that reflects the forces that shaped American society into what it is today.

P.D.A.

Notices

1997 Maryland Historical Society Book Award

The 1997 competition for the MHS Book Award has resulted in a dead heat between two exemplary works on antebellum slavery. Co-winners Christopher Phillips (*Freedom's Port: The African-American Community of Baltimore, 1790–1860,* University of Illinois Press), and T. Stephen Whitman (*The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Manumission in Baltimore and Early National Maryland,* University of Kentucky Press) will share the $1,000 award. Congratulations to both from a deadlocked but nevertheless heartily appreciative panel of judges.

1997 Undergraduate Essay Contest Awards

Zachary R. Calo, a spring graduate of the Johns Hopkins University, is the winner of the 1997 college undergraduate essay contest. The award for this annual competition, the Eisenberg Essay Prize, is funded by Gerson G. Eisenberg, local author, philanthropist, historian, and long-time member of the MHS Education Committee.

The winning essay, "From Poor Relief to the Poorhouse: The Response to Poverty in Prince George's County, Maryland, 1710–1770" was chosen by the judges for its originality, thorough research, and literary quality. A history major, Mr. Calo participated in a special Hopkins program that enables students to accelerate their studies and receive a B.A. and M.A. degree in four years. He will begin graduate work in history at the University of Pennsylvania this fall.

The college essay contest, sponsored by the MHS Education Committee, calls for research on a Maryland subject and use of primary sources. Deadline for submissions is June 15 of each academic year.

Winners Announced for the 1996/1997 Sumner A. Parker and Norris Harris Prizes

The Maryland Historical Society takes pleasure in announcing the winners of the 1996/1997 Sumner A. Parker Prize and Norris Harris Prize competitions. These prizes are awarded annually for those books judged to represent outstanding contributions to genealogical scholarship in Maryland.

Norris Harris Prize Awards:

Mary Louise Donnelly, awarded first honors for her 1996 work: *Colonial Settlers, St. Clement's Bay, 1634–1780, St. Mary's County, Maryland* (Mary Louise Donnelly, P. O. Box 97, Ennis, TX, 75120)

Gregory A. Wood, awarded second honors for his 1995 work: *A Guide to the Acadians in Maryland in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1995)

Peter Wilson Coldham, awarded Special Mention for the final two volumes of his five-volume series: *Settlers of Maryland* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company)

Sumner A. Parker Prize Awards:

Diana Dieterle, awarded first honors for her 1995 work: *Thomas Smithson (1675–1732) of Baltimore County, Maryland, and His Descendants, the Family of Hugh Franklin Smisson, Jr.* (Dr. Hugh F. Smisson, Jr., Macon, Ga., 31210)

Virginia Hagen Wrightson, awarded Honorable Mention for her 1990 work: *Some Wrightsons of Talbot County* (Virginia Hagen Wrightson, Portland, Ore.)

Barbara C. Long, awarded Honorable Mention for her 1995 work: *History of the Michael and Sibyl Gore Family of Baltimore County, Maryland* (Barbara C. Long, Chesterland, Ohio, 44026)

Buttersworth Paintings at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels will exhibit "The Cold Green Sea and the Sky: Paintings by Thomas and J. E. Buttersworth" through April 26, 1998. This exhibition of superb marine paintings is on loan from the Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport, Maine.

D.B.S.

Maryland Picture Puzzle

We thought that the fall 1997 Picture Puzzle would be even harder than usual—it could have been any number of towns with the hilly terrain of Western Maryland—but a surprising number of readers did come up with the correct answer: Frostburg's Main Street, circa 1905. Our congratulations to Mr. Percy Martin, Mr. Raymond Martin, Ann Callan, and Mr. William Hollifield, all of whom made the correct identification.

Test your knowledge of Baltimore's theatrical history by identifying this stage personality's portrait from our collections. Please send your answers to: Picture Puzzle, Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, Maryland, 21201-4674

A Note on the Old Defenders

The veterans of the War of 1812 pictured on the cover of the fall issue generated considerable interest from readers, some of whom wanted to know if we could identify any of those gentlemen. Fortunately, the MHS Prints and Photographs Department holds several copies of this picture, and the old soldiers' names are recorded on one of them. They are, from left to right, Samuel Jennings, Asbury Jarrett, George Bass, James Morford, William Batchellor (holding the flag), James McCoy, William Stites, Henry Lightner, Darius Wheeler, Elijah Stansbury, Nathan Watts, and Edward Danaker.

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201 West Monument Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher *(Not Printer)*

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9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor *(Do Not Leave Blank)*

Publisher *(Name and Complete Mailing Address)*

Maryland Historicel Society, 201 W. Monument St., Beltimore, MD 21201

Editor *(Name and Complete Mailing Address)*

Robert I. Cottom, 201 W. Monument St., Baltimore, MD 21201

Managing Editor *(Name and Complete Mailing Address)*

Donna Bleir Shear, 201 W. Monument St., Baltimore, MD 21201

10. Owner *(If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereafter the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address as well as that of each individual must be given. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, its name and address must be stated.) (Do Not Leave Blank.)*

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11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check here. ☐ None

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13. Publication Name	14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below	
Maryland Historical Magazine	Fall 1997 (October)	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	**Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months**	**Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date**
a. Total No. Copies *(Net Press Run)*	4233	4410
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (1) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, and Counter Sales *(Not Mailed)*	85	82
(2) Paid or Requested Mail Subscriptions *(Include Advertisers' Proof Copies/Exchange Copies)*	3844	3931
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation *(Sum of 15b(1) and 15b(2))*	3929	4013
d. Free Distribution by Mail *(Samples, Complimentary, and Other Free)*	84	86
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail *(Carriers or Other Means)*	25	31
f. Total Free Distribution *(Sum of 15d and 15e)*	109	117
g. Total Distribution *(Sum of 15c and 15f)*	4038	4130
h. Copies Not Distributed (1) Office Use, Leftovers, Spoiled	217	190
(2) Return from News Agents	12	6
i. Total *(Sum of 15g, 15h(1), and 15h(2))*	4267	4326
Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation *(15c / 15g x 100)*	97.3	97.1

16. This Statement of Ownership will be printed in the Winter issue of this publication. ☐ Check box if not required to publish.

17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner — Date

Robert I. Cottom — 12/31/97

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions *(including fines and imprisonment)* and/or civil sanctions *(including multiple damages and civil penalties).*

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3. Be sure to furnish all information called for in item 15, regarding circulation. Free circulation must be shown in items 15d, e, and f.
4. If the publication had second-class authorization as a general or requester publication, this Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation must be published; it must be printed in any issue in October or the first printed issue after October, if the publication is not published during October.
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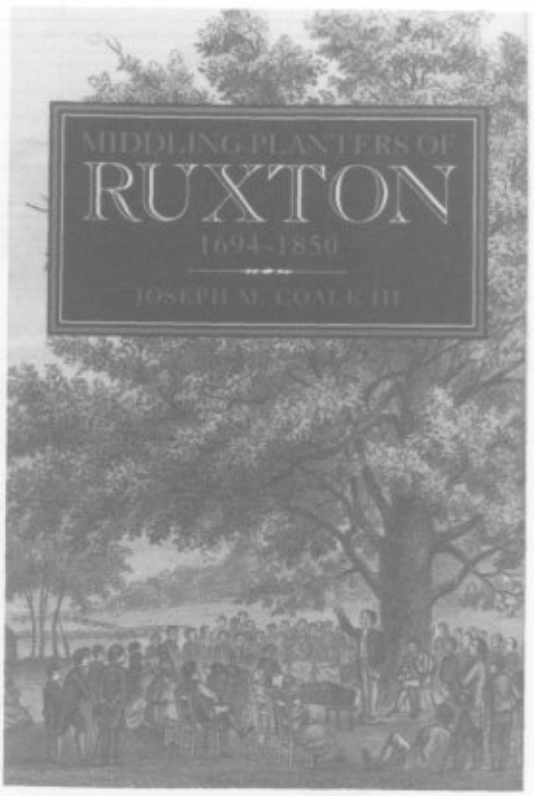
By Joseph M. Coale



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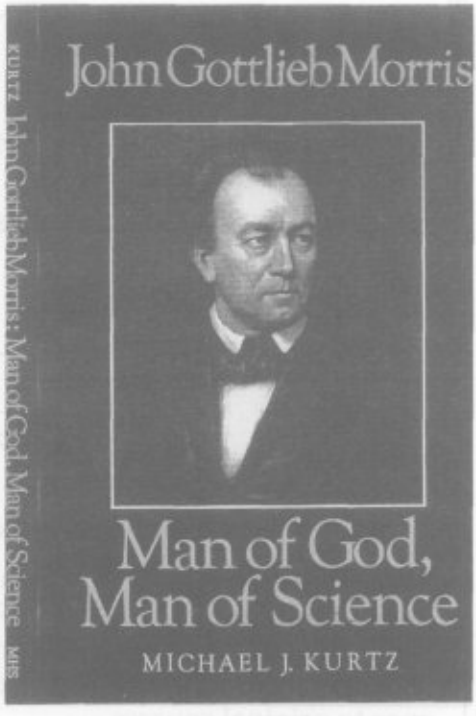

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Michael J. Kurtz is assistant archivist of the National Archives and a resident of Annapolis.

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The *Maryland Historical Magazine* welcomes submissions from authors. All articles will be acknowledged, but only those accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope will be returned. Submissions should be printed or typed manuscript. Once accepted, articles should be on 3.5-inch (preferably) or 5.25-inch disks for IBM (or compatible) PCs or Macintosh. Preferred word-processing programs are Wordperfect or Microsoft Word. Guidelines for contributors are available on request. Address the Managing Editor.

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by Elaine G. Breslaw

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The Great Escape of "Tunnel Joe" Holmes
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